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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you intend to celebrate Valentine's Day this year?

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INSIDE

Kickback Scandal

William Lerach, a former partner at a well-known New York law firm, was sentenced Monday to two years in federal prison.

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Online Courses

The online component of studying is becoming an important tool for educators to prevent students from dropping out.

CAMPUS LIFE...Page 17

Art Robbery

Three gunmen in ski masks and dark clothes grab paintings by Cezanne, Degas, van Gogh and Monet valued at $163.2 million.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

Justices: Tinian Shipping liable to pay CPA damages. PAGE 6

Cashier's bravery foils armed men's rob try. PAGE 7

Casino project scaled down

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Bridge Investment Group is moving forward with its planned 300-room casino hotel investment project on Tinian, albeit scaled down into the $40-$50 million range from the originally planned $200 million investment.

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ISLAND VISITOR JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

The guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald (DDG-62) is seen at the Port of Saipan yesterday. It arrived Monday and is set to depart Friday after doing activities including a Community Relations project with the First Lady's Foundation and a VFW and Saipan Chamber of Commerce reception. Home ported at Yokosuka Naval Base in Yokosuka, Japan, USS Fitzgerald is an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer in the United States Navy and has 310 crew members.

Saipan has worst water problems in US, says EPA

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Saipan has among the worst water problems in the nation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency told local lawmakers yesterday.

The island's water system has been

See SAIPAN on Page 4

2007 remittances decline to $93.6M

- Lowest level in four years
- Some remittance centers close down

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Remittances dropped to its lowest levels in four years as the sector experienced an 8.4-percent drop in overseas money transfers in calendar year 2007.

According to last year's remittance report from the Department of Commerce, remittance figures decreased to $93.6 million compared to $102.2 million

See 2007 on Page 4

Community pays last respects to JP

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

More than 500 people attended the funeral yesterday of the late *Saipan Tribune*'s publisher John "JP" Pangelinan.

RELATED NEWS
A community says farewell. PAGE 18

See COMMUNITY on Page 4

Bishop Tomas A. Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa offer the blessing song in front of the coffin of the late *Saipan Tribune* publisher John "JP" Pangelinan during the Eucharistic Celebration of Christian burial at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral yesterday morning. JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

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Local

'Chief justice's brother got $200K from Malite case'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan should be disqualified from participating in the appeal filed by lawyers Reynaldo O. Yana and Antonio M. Atalig because his brother, Roman Demapan, received $200,000 from the $1.3 million in attorney's fees in the Angel Malite estate's probate.

According to attorney Stephen J. Nutting, counsel for the Malite heirs, chief justice Miguel Demapan's younger brother, Roman Demapan, has a substantial interest in the outcome of the proceeding in the high court.

Nutting said Atalig submitted a statement stating that his "legal intern" Roman Demapan was deserving of $122,940 in fees payable at a rate of $125 per hour.

Yet, Nutting pointed out, one month later Atalig "distributed" over $200,000 to Roman Demapan.

The heirs' lawyer asserted that Commonwealth law prohibits any judge from handling a case in which any person with which he has "second degree of relationship" has "an interest that could be substantially affected by the outcome of the proceeding."

Nutting also cited that Atalig is chief justice Demapan's former law partner.

He said that despite these facts, on Jan. 25, 2008, only one day after Atalig and Yana filed a motion in the high court, chief justice Demapan issued an ex parte order staying the suspension of the two lawyers.

Demapan

Nutting said the chief justice also requested copies of the contempt order issued by Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo and transcripts of the Malite contempt proceedings for further review.

"Chief Justice Demapan's order was entered without any notice to the Malite heirs and without any hearing or opportunity to respond, not only by the Malite heirs, but by the CNMI Government through the Office of the Attorney General which was a named party in the appeal," Nutting said.

He asserted that the chief justice must be automatically disqualified from hearing any further proceedings related to the contempt order.

Nutting said Roman Demapan's interest in the outcome of these proceedings is even more evident given that Govendo's contempt order requires the return of almost $1.3 million in attorneys' fees , over $200,000 of which was paid to Roman Demapan.

Moreover, the lawyer said, the contempt order specifically froze all bank accounts of Roman Demapan and ordered a subpoena of his bank records to account for the over $200,000 he received from the Malite estate.

"Obviously, the purpose of such orders were to facilitate the recovery of fees paid to Roman Demapan," Nutting said.

On Jan. 15, Govendo found Yana and Atalig in contempt of court and suspended them from practicing law for failing to return to the court the $1.3 million in attorneys' fees that had been awarded them in the Malite probate.

Govendo also kicked out Jesus C. Tudela as the estate administrator for mismanagement.

Yana and Atalig appealed to the high court. The two lawyers argued that Govendo acted in excess of his jurisdiction. They asked the high tribunal to vacate the suspension order and demanded review of other issues in the underlying Malite probate.

Last Friday, the high court stopped the suspension of Yana and Atalig and set an oral argument on March 11, 2008. The order was issued by chief justice Demapan and associate justices Alexandro C. Castro and John A. Manglona.

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House approves $2M payment for Aetna

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives has approved a bill to appropriate over $2 million to pay off medical claims incurred before the government insurance plan was privatized.

House members voted unanimously to pass the bill allowing the government to reimburse part of the $2.4-million "runoff claims" paid by Aetna Global Benefits to clinics and hospitals.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Ray N. Yumul, now goes to the Senate for action. It will become law once approved by the Senate and signed by the governor.

The $2.158 million appropriation comes from the $2.232 million that the Marianas Public Land Trust paid recently to the general fund.

According to the Constitution, the Department of Public Lands is tasked with managing leases of public lands on behalf of the people of Northern Marianas descent. After deducting administrative costs from the collected fees, MPLA should transfer the balance to MPLT. The trust then invests the money. Income earned from those investments is transferred to the general fund for appropriation by the Legislature.

Aetna, which runs the government group health and life insurance plan, has threatened to terminate the program if the firm is not reimbursed soon for the runoff claims. Government employees will lose insurance coverage if the program is canceled.

Runoff claims are medical costs that members of the old Group Health and Life Insurance Program incurred, but did not file a claim for before Oct. 31, 2007.

GHLI's old third party administrative services agreement with Aetna expired on that date. On Nov. 1, 2007, the GHLI program was privatized and awarded to Aetna, through the competitive bidding process.

The privatized program only covers all new claims arising from medical services rendered after Nov. 1. The CNMI government is now liable for all costs incurred before then.

But Aetna, with the understanding that it would be reimbursed, paid the clinics a total of $2.4 million in runoff claims.

OPA wants to hire 10 personnel

The Office of Public Auditor, which has cut personnel over the past years, is now understaffed and wants to hire new employees.

Public Auditor Michael S. Sablan has asked the governor and lawmakers for consent to hire three investigators, six analysts and an attorney.

He said funding under the continuing appropriations is available to pay the salaries of these positions.

According to Sablan, OPA needs an attorney and an investigator to work with the Attorney General's Office on combating white-collar crime. This is a follow up move to the recent creation by OPA and the AGO of a task force on government corruption.

Sablan also said OPA is looking to promote some of its analysts to "senior analysts," with corresponding increase in salary and responsibilities.

OPA's pool of analysts is a result of efforts by the agency to transition staffing to resident employees. The transition, which began in 2002, is now complete. During this period, OPA used mostly federal and some local funds to train the employees.

Sablan said OPA intends to announce the senior analyst positions, but will also urge current analysts to apply for the promotions.

Since Sablan's initial appointment to OPA in December 2000, OPA has cut personnel significantly. OPA has brought the number of investigators from five to one. From 24 analysts, OPA now has nine. OPA used to have five audit managers, and now has two.

Meanwhile, OPA's work has expanded, according to Sablan.

He said that the requests for OPA audits and investigations have grown exponentially. OPA has assumed a more active role in educating the candidates about and monitoring campaign finance, and in preparing accurate lists for the Department of Finance to certify for financial disclosures. In addition, OPA writes decisions on appeal for all procurement protests except for a couple of autonomous agencies.

"All of these duties are in addition to OPA's primary mission to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse through thorough audits and investigations," he said. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Chamber's Arenovski clarifies 2008 outlook

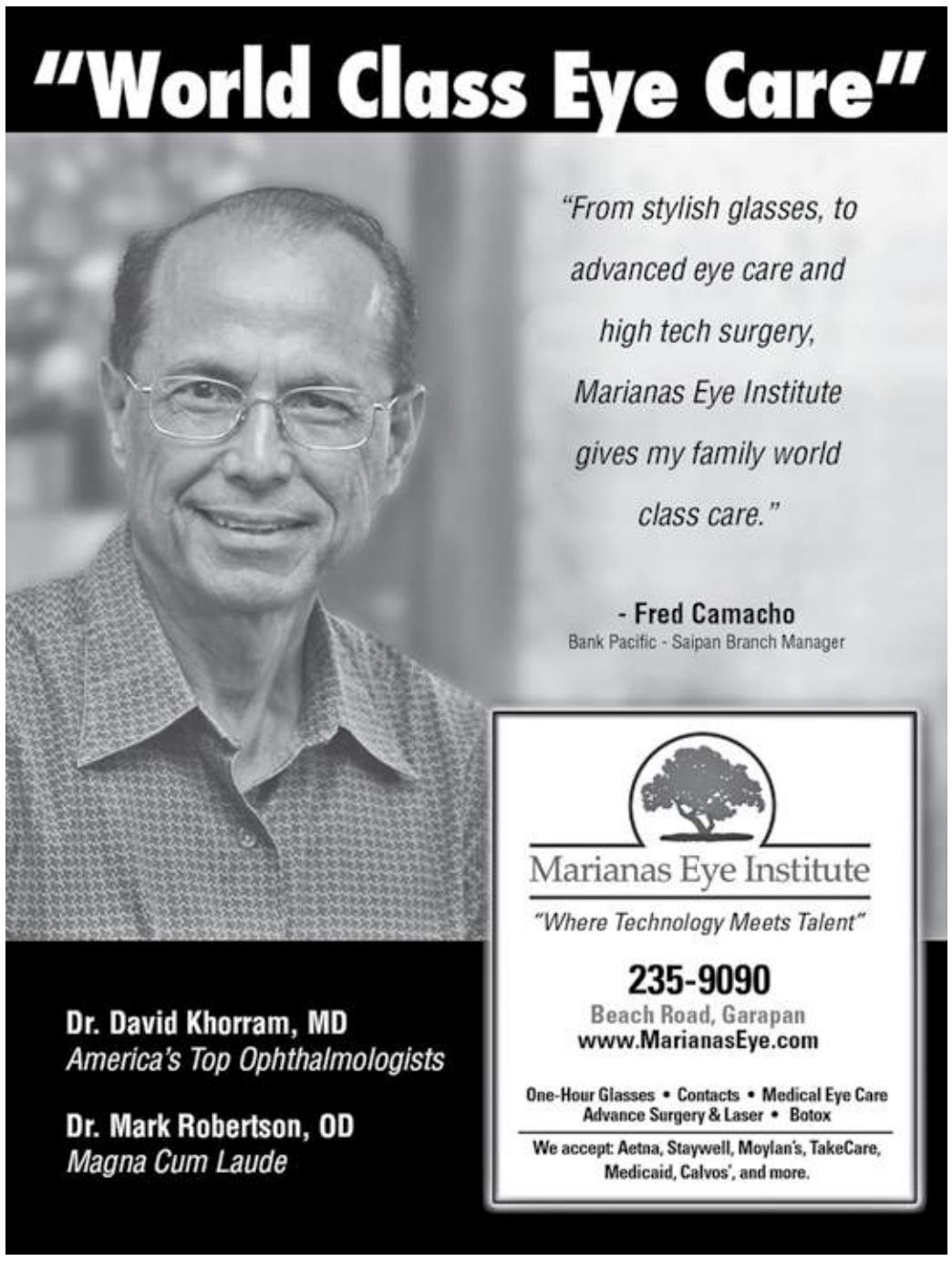
Saipan Chamber of Commerce president James T Arenovski has clarified that, while 2008 offers some rays of hope for the local economy, the islands are a long way from recovering from the upheavals brought about by the pullout of Japan Airlines and the closing of several garment factories.

"As for 2008, there continue to have some rays of hope in the economy. The opening of The 360 Restaurant and another new restaurant soon to open on the ground floor of the Marianas Business Center [would] provide new job opportunities and business for wholesalers," he said.

"The recent chartering of flights in from Russia appear to be very successful and will send positive news back to Russia about our destination. Students continue to come in from Korea to study at a variety of schools on the island, help boost enrollment. The most recent purchase of the [Hotel] Nikko Hotel by UMDA is another reason for optimism," added the president of Delta Management Corp.

He said these investments and commitments should not be taken lightly. These investors, Arenovski stated, see opportunities ahead for the Commonwealth and they have been affirming that with their investments.

"Most economies run in cycles, there are ups and downs. What we all control is how long we will be in that 'downward cycle.' Good well thought-out decisions by all when deciding on our future will yield good results and the Chamber will do its part to help our political and business leaders move the NMI towards an 'upward cycle' and improved economy," he said. ***(Mark Rabago)***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New edition of *MP* magazine now on sale

The January-February issue of *MP* magazine is now on sale at numerous locations on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

In *MP*'s quest to inform and educate its readers, two feature articles in this issue are related to a major local topic of discussion over the past few months, the effect that H.R. 3079 will have on the CNMI and the status of its nonresident workers.

One article, "The Road to Commonwealth—the Last Mile," was written by Sam McPhetres—who has been a close observer of the self-government process in the former U.S. Trust Territory and the CNMI since the early 1970s. In his essay, McPhetres presents a brief history of the CNMI's "Road to Commonwealth" along with the initial purpose of the CNMI-U.S. Covenant, as well as those provisions in the Covenant relevant to federalization of the CNMI's immigration. McPhetres also points out the blunders that were made by both sides as the provisions laid out in the Covenant were implemented. The essay encourages people to read the pending legislation carefully, to discuss it objectively, and to put into action an essential process—planning.

In the second feature article, James Benedetto, the CNMI's Federal Labor Ombudsman, responds to *MP*'s set of 24 questions relative to local concerns about H.R. 3079, the legislation pending in the U.S. Congress aimed at reforming the immigration laws of the CNMI.

Of the two other feature articles, one was contributed by columnist and "local gadfly" (as she likes to be known), Ruth Tighe: "Eco-Tourism 101—A Means for Expanding the CNMI's Visitor Industry?" The other is a second sneak preview from Don Farrell's major work-in-progress, *Declassified—the Tinian Atomic Bomb Files*. In this issue, Farrell provides *MP* with excerpts from Chapter 11, "Choosing Tinian: December 17, 1944 – February 14, 1945."

Ed Propst, *MP*'s publisher, notes that the magazine has been increasing in popularity, evidenced by the numerous queries he has been receiving from local readers asking when the next issue will be available for purchase. Propst also says that he was extremely gratified by two recent comments about the magazine. A local reader told him that he always buys two copies of the magazine, one for his family members and him to read and the other to keep as a collector's item. And then a stateside reader wrote to say, "Even the ads were very interesting, which is most unusual as most of the time they insult the reader's intelligence."

The magazine is now being sold locally in several locations, including Joeten stores, Price-Costco, Java Joe's, Kagman Market, Tun Kiku's Market, NMC Bookstore, Fleming's on Tinian, and As Paris Restaurant on Rota.

Other articles, each accompanied by eye-catching, high-end photography and appealing layout design, deal with topics such as Rob Hunter's Micronesia, cell phone etiquette, a formula for health improvement, the right to smoke in bars and restaurants, a review of Saipan's hottest new eating spot—360, a tropical tale (this one about what was undoubtedly the most bizarre typhoon in Micronesia during the past century), and another MP top ten—"Why We Still Live in the CNMI." Finally, there's an array of candid photos in the "Seens and Heards" section.

Inquiries about *MP* and its advertising rates can be made at the Titan Media Group office located on the first floor of the Cabrera Center on Beach Road or by calling Catherine Perry Anderson, *MP* Sales Director, at 235-4176. Subscription information is provided at www.marianaspride.com. ***(PR)***

Neighborhood Watch holds first meeting

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

The first organizational meeting of the Neighborhood Watch Task Force is scheduled for today at the Mayor's Office Conference room.

The group will announce its new officers and discuss further the duties of the newly formed task force.

Mayor Juan B. Tudela had appointed four members to the task force for four different precincts: Santiago Tudela, precinct 1; Bill Santos, precinct 2; Manny Mangarero, precinct 3; and Danny Sablan, precint 4.

Valencia Tenorio was appointed by the Marianas Visitors Authority while the Sgt. Cel Damian was appointed by the JROTC.

Tudela signed the municipal bill to establish neighborhood watches in villages. The bill was passed by the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council.

Although the authority to pass ordinances by the mayor and the council has been challenged and questioned, it has not stopped the group from moving forward with the neighborhood watch program.

The task force is intended to enhance the safety, security and protection of villages on Saipan.

CASINO

From Page 1

Phillip Mendiola-Long, the company's vice president for CNMI operations, declined to comment on the downsizing of Bridge Investment's outlay for its Tinian casino hotel project.

One of the company's investors, Erik F. Wang, arrived on Saipan yesterday and announced to the media Bridge Investment's intention to move ahead with the project, said the project would be composed of two phases that would total some $40 million to $50 million.

Saipan Tribune archives quoted Mendiola-Long as saying in previous interviews that the project would total $150 million to $200 million.

The project's "ceremonial groundbreaking" in late December 2007 was cancelled, in part because of the introduction of House Bill 15-322, a measure that intended to legalize gaming on Saipan.

Besides the Saipan gaming bill, which the Senate rejected a few weeks later, Wang said the company also took a long hard look at the islands' possible federalization of immigration and minimum wage increase before deciding that it was still feasible to continue with its investments on Tinian.

Wang, who had whirlwind meetings with various government officials yesterday, said he expects Bridge Investment to hold its groundbreaking ceremony for its 50,000-square-meter project in late March or early April this year.

He said the groundbreaking is contingent on Bridge Investment securing all the necessary permits from government agencies: Coastal Resource Management, Historic Preservation Office, Division of Environmental Quality, Division of Fish and Wildlife, among others.

The first phase of construction would involve the building of the hotel and casino complex. It would cost roughly around $25 million to $30 million and is expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2009 or first quarter of 2010.

At that time, Mendiola-Long and Wang said, the hotel and casino would be open for customers, which he expects would come from China, Korea, Japan, and other countries in the Pacific Rim.

The still unnamed hotel and casino, the two said, will have top-of-the-line restaurants, spas, and other amenities common to hotels.

Wang said the second phase of the project would involve the construction of the casino hotel's villas and bungalows and the outlay for that project is around $15 million. He did not disclose the timetable for phase two's completion.

Bridge Investment has hired the China-based Tianyuan Construction Group to build the 300-room hotel and casino.

Aside from Wang, other investors in the Tinian project are Rudy Pamintuan, Howard Li, Ken Wong, Akshay Desai, and Rocky Li.

2007

From Page 1

in calendar year 2006.

The remittance figures last year are the lowest since Commerce reported total remittances of $80.5 million in 2003. The following two years, remittances increased by double figures—17.5 percent to $94.6 million in 2004 and 19 percent to $112.6 million in 2005.

The outflow of overseas money, however, began to shrink the next year, 2006, when Commerce reported a 9.2-percent drop in remittances to the aforementioned $102.2 million.

The 2007 report furnished by Commerce saw eight remittance centers closing, showing no activity, or not renewing.

America Joint-Partner Corporation reported remittances of $5.5 million in the first two quarters of last year before ceasing operations.

Micronesia Money Exchange Co., for its part, reported remittances of $359,165 before closing shop.

P&A Money Transfer has no activity in the first three quarters of the year before netting $56,808 in overseas money transfers in the final quarter.

Oceania Remittance Center did not renew but recorded remittances of $24,937 in the first and second quarters.

PQ Corporation, meanwhile, had no activity in the first three months before ending up with remittances of $538,054 in the final quarter.

Yun Mee Corporation closed in the first quarter of 2007, but reported remittances of $759,464.

PTI Pacific and Trade Micronesia, for their part, had no activity for the entire 2007 and as such had no remittance figures to report.

Western Union continued to outperform the rest of the industry, recording remittances of $36.4 million in 2007. LBC Mabuhay ranked second with $11.1 million followed by PNB Corp. and AJP Money Transfer with remittances of $7.5 million and $7.1 million, respectively.

Xiong Wai Company, Inc. round out the Top 5 remittance centers for the previous year with $6.7 million.

Money Express ($1.5 million), APEX Remittances ($4.6 million), Rustan's Foreign Exchange ($6.5 million), Saipan Galing Remittance ($47,854), BPI Remittance Center ($238,797), Thailand Food Store ($431,683), and Universal Group Dev., Inc. ($3.7 million) make up the rest of 20 remittance centers that operated in the CNMI last year.

SAIPAN

From Page 1

cited four times for health-based violations in the last half of 2007. These violations involve bacterial contamination and nitrates in the water.

John McCarroll, manager of the EPA Pacific Southwest Region's Pacific Islands Office, said this is too many. In the rest of the United States, 96 percent of water systems have not had any violation in a year.

"If you've had at least one violation, you rank among the worst in the country," McCarroll said in a presentation before the House Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications.

He noted that the CNMI have had 44 health-based violations since 2001. There was a 15-month period—from 2006 to 2007—during which Saipan had zero violations. But since the last half of 2007, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has had four water violations.

McCarroll noted that the violations coincided with CUC's financial problems, which resulted from higher fuel costs and the power rate rollback in October 2007.

"As we all know, power subsidizes water at CUC. Because CUC was collecting less money, resources [for the water system] ended up being diverted [to other needs]," he said.

The frequent power outages over the past months have affected the nearly 50 chlorinators, which need to be manually restarted each time power goes out.

McCarroll also said that CUC's recurring violations of federal water regulations result from a chronic lack of funding for infrastructure and maintenance, as well as the lack of skilled personnel at CUC.

CUC is now working with EPA on a stipulated court order that will force the utility to fix problems in Saipan's water system within an agreed upon timeline. The order, or "consent decree," is expected to be finalized in a few months.

McCarroll expressed hope that the enforcement action will fast track improvements to the quality of Saipan's water.

"Even though the situation is not good, it is not hopeless. We have seen a lot of improvements in the last few years. EPA is looking at the enforcement action as a way to better the situation, not to disparage anyone," he said.

COMMUNITY

From Page 1

Pangelinan's casket was escorted from the Borja Funeral Home to the Mount Carmel Cathedral early yesterday morning where his numerous families and friends had gathered to pay their final respects.

Prior to the Mass, Tan Holdings Corp. president Jerry Tan and Pangelinan's son, Jay M. Pangelina, paid special tributes to the man variously described as kind, cheerful, generous, and very friendly.

First cousin Victor C. Pangelinan said that JP was the kind of person who did not know how to make anybody feel bad. "It's just not in him. He didn't know how to say 'no' to anyone," he said.

Tan, who appeared deeply affected during his speech, eulogized the 29-year friendship he shared with JP, describing him as "my best friend."

He recounted the several trips he had with JP and described him as the type who will give the shirt off his back to help those in need.

Son Jay M. Pangelinan shared that he and his father had gotten much closer after JP first found out he had cancer. Jay described a game of golf he had with his father, which he said he will always treasure because that was the only time they had played golf together.

Among those who helped carry his casket from the church were Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, Patrick P. Tenorio, Edward Flores, Joaquin M. Pangelinan, Jay M. Pangelinan, John J. Pangelinan and Jerry Tan.

Pangelinan passed away on Feb. 5, 2008 after a long battle with lung cancer.

His remains will be escorted to the Saipan International Airport today for departure to California for interment services.

Upon his arrival in California, his remains will be escorted to the Holy Cross Mortuary in Culver City. Viewing and last respects will be held on Friday, Feb. 15, 2008, at Holy Cross Mortuary in Culver City, CA.

Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated the next day on Saturday, Feb. 16, at American Martyrs Catholic Church starting 10am.

In California, he will be much closer to his children, four of whom have made the state their home.

However, Jay said his father's spirit will always be with the islands. As he said during his eulogy, "You can take the man out of the islands. But you cannot take the islands out of the man."

JP was born on Saipan on Oct. 26, 1937. He was 70 years old.

He is survived by his six children: Donna Pangelinan, Lisa Pangelinan, Johnny Pangelinan, Jay Pangelinan, Jennifer Pangelinan, and Christina. Except for Johnny (Guam) and Christina (Saipan), all make their home in California.

NMC defends use of TOEFL to test English skills

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez defended yesterday the college's use of the Test of English as a Foreign Language or TOEFL, saying this is being done to ensure that students are appropriately placed in reading and writing classes that correspond to their capabilities.

Fernandez said that NMC will be doing its students a "great disservice and setting them up for failure if we indiscriminately place them in a college English class that may be beyond their comprehension."

However, Jeanne H. Rayphand, legal counsel for the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems Inc., said the TOEFL results "in arbitrary and unfair exclusion of Commonwealth student from classes for credit." She said it also delays and results in an added expense for students attempting to earn a college degree.

NMC has used the TOEFL for more than 20 years to evaluate incoming students' English proficiency. The practice was necessitated in part by NMC's open admission policy, which precludes NMC from requiring entrance examinations like the Standard Achievement Test to determine student's readiness for college level English.

Rayphand said, though, that no student who has successfully graduated from a Commonwealth high school should be denied admission to English 101.

Fernandez

"They're talking about students whose native tongue is not English, but what about the students whose first language is English?" Rayphand asked.

She added that NMC should use the TOEFL exams as a recommendation but not a requirement. "If they want to recommend it to students, that's fine. But if a student decides to take English 101, they should be able to," Rayphand said.

The TOEFL exam is a test that measures the ability of nonnative speakers of English to use and understand English as it is spoken, written, and heard in college and university settings.

According to Fernandez, the use of a standardized test like TOEFL helps NMC to ensure that students are placed in appropriate course levels.

Rayphand pointed out, though, that the TOEFL "is not intended for students for whom English is their first language nor is it intended for students who have demonstrated their ability to succeed throughout their high school studies where the courses were in English."

In a 1996 evaluation report, NMC's accrediting body, the Western Association of Schools & Colleges, recommended that NMC explore other available alternative instruments for establishing placement in English classes.

Thus, as part of the 2000 institutional self-study evaluation that directly responded to WASC's 1996 recommendations, NMC indicated that TOEFL scores are used internationally as both a means of assessing the proficiency of students whose native language is not English, and for determining preparedness for acceptance to colleges and universities.

Additionally, the appropriateness of using the TOEFL test for placement purposes was also supported by the findings of the NMC Programs Evaluation: English Program Report, which was published in May 2004.

A subsequent evaluation report based on WASC's team visit to the institution in October 2000 reaffirmed the college's validation of using the TOEFL to place native speaking students at the appropriate level.

The WASC team concluded by stating: "The college has adequately addressed WASC's recommendations."

According to Rayphand, more than 60 percent of students graduating from Commonwealth high schools are denied entry into English 101 or any other English course offering college credit at NMC.

"The president now says that 80-90 percent of students wanting to go to NMC do not pass the placement test," Rayphand said.

She said that, "given the mission of NMC to provide postsecondary education for the people of the Commonwealth and given the financial and economic realities in the Commonwealth, NMC should not be adding an unnecessary delay and financial burden to students of the Commonwealth who want to obtain a college degree here in the Commonwealth."

Despite this, Fernandez is standing pat on the college's position on the TOEFL. "While we appreciate the public discourse that has occurred regarding this matter, we strongly believe in the validity and reliability of using the TOEL to test English preparedness," she said.

Nonetheless, as part of NMC's continuous improvement efforts, there will be a regular, recurring review of the English program and assessment of student learning outcomes, she added.

Stiffer penalties approved for curfew violators

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has signed into law a bill that imposes stiffer sanctions on violators of the youth curfew.

Initiated by the CNMI Youth Congress, the new law increases penalties not only on the youth violators, but also on the parents and guardians.

Under Public Law 15-129, there will be uniform penalties for violating the respective curfew laws on Saipan, Tinian and Rota. Youth violators will face up to 30 days in prison and be ordered to conduct up to 250 hours of community service, instead of simply paying a fine.

Parents, guardians and other adults who allow the youth to stay out during curfew hours may be fined $750, instead of $500.

The Youth Congress, who sponsored the bill through Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider, called for stricter enforcement upon finding that many minors are staying out beyond curfew, "possibly breaking other laws too."

On Saipan, curfew hours are from 10pm to 5am for minors aged 16 to 18 years, and 9pm to 5am for minors who are under 16 years old.

On Tinian, minors are not allowed outside from 8pm to 5am from Monday to Thursday, and from 11pm to 5am from Friday to Sunday and on holidays.

On Rota, curfew hours for minors are 9pm to 5am. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Justices: Tinian Shipping liable to pay CPA damages

By FERDE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Supreme Court yesterday stood by its earlier decision that found Tinian Shipping Company Inc. owing damages to the Commonwealth Ports Authority for unpaid fees prior to August 2000 for every passenger embarking from the Saipan Ferry Terminal.

The high court ruled that its previous opinion fully addressed the issues raised by Tinian Shipping.

"This court did not ignore or incorrectly construe any legal issues or factual matters alleged by the petitioner," said the high tribunal's opinion penned by associate justice Alexandro C. Castro and concurred by chief justice Miguel S. Demapan and justice pro tem F. Philip Carbullido.

In their decision issued on Oct. 15, 2007, the justices said calculation of damages shall not include fees for Tinian Shipping personnel since CPA has waived these fees.

The justices then remanded CPA's lawsuit against Tinian Shipping to the trial court for a determination of the company's damages owed to CPA.

"The language in the lease makes clear that the parties intended to charge $3.75 for every passenger leaving the Saipan Ferry Terminal," said the justices.

The justices said that, although CPA subsequently entered into a mutual modification of the contract that waived its initial contractual right to collect the fee from employees of Tinian Shipping, this change is limited in scope and does not amount to a course of performance modification regarding the remaining passengers.

Tinian Shipping, through counsel G. Anthony Long, asked the high court for a rehearing. Long cited that the high court erred in arguing that a contract must be ambiguous for the trial court to consider course of performance evidence. Long also argued that the high court did not address its estoppel argument.

In denying the petition for rehearing, the justices said they cited several cases from outside the Commonwealth in support of their analysis and conclusion in the Oct. 15 opinion. The justices made clear, though, that they reached their conclusion based on Commonwealth case law and the statute.

Citing additional cases outside of the Commonwealth to support their analysis does not violate the statute, the justices pointed out.

CPA and Tinian Shipping had entered into a lease agreement for dock space at the Tinian and Saipan seaports.

The lease allowed Tinian Shipping the use of both the Saipan and Tinian Ferry Terminals in exchange for monthly rental payments of $180 for the dockage fee, $.20 per square foot for the dock space on Saipan, $.05 per square foot for the dock space on Tinian, and a per person fee of $3.75 for "every person boarding a Tinian Shipping vessel at the Saipan Ferry Terminal."

Tinian Shipping started its ferry services in 1996. In order to calculate the per-person lease payments, Tinian Shipping submitted monthly passenger reports to CPA showing the number of passengers boarding at the Saipan Seaport.

Non-revenue passengers boarding at Saipan were never included in the lease payment calculations. CPA contends that it waived the passenger fee for non-revenue passengers who were Tinian Shipping staff members.

Tinian Shipping, however, understood non-revenue to be a much larger class of people. Subsequently, Tinian Shipping started to exempt large numbers of non-employees by issuing complimentary tickets to regular passengers.

Initially, CPA did not object. However, because of the large numbers of non-revenue passengers, CPA failed to meet its minimum gross revenue requirements.

CPA demanded strict adherence to the terms of the lease and insisted that it was entitled to collect fees for "every person boarding…at the Saipan Ferry Terminal."

Tinian Shipping disputed this claim as a new interpretation of the lease. The parties could not agree. CPA sued Tinian Shipping.

A bench trial ensued and the trial court ruled that CPA was not entitled to recover any passenger fees prior to August 2000. CPA appealed.

In reversing the trial court's decision, the justices in their Oct. 15 ruling pointed out that it is clear from the lease that the parties intended to charge $3.75 for "every person boarding a [Tinian Shipping] vessel at the Saipan Ferry Terminal."

The justices pointed out that both parties agreed to this fee.

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| ASIAN ISLAND | V005 | 2/29 FRI | 3/1 SAT | 3/6 THU | 3/8 SAT | 3/11 TUE | 3/12 WED | 3/14 FRI | 3/15 SAT | 3/18 TUE |
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Cashier's bravery foils 2 armed men's robbery try

A female cashier's bravery foiled two armed men's attempt to rob a poker arcade in San Jose Monday morning.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said yesterday that the suspects ran away when the cashier refused to open the door of the cashier's booth at Leo Poker.

Police were sent to Leo Poker on Monday at 5:05am after receiving a report about an attempted armed robbery incident.

Preliminary investigation showed that two unidentified men, armed with a possible flare gun and pepper mace, entered the poker establishment.

One of the suspects assaulted the security guard by spraying him with pepper mace.

The second suspect, who was armed with the possible flare gun, demanded that the cashier open the door to the cashier's booth. The cashier, who was inside the booth, refused. The second suspect fired one shot, but the cashier again refused to open the door.

The suspects then ran off. No items were stolen from the poker arcade. The cashier was not injured.

Ogumoro said the CNMI Crime Stoppers Program is offering up to $1,000 to anyone who could provide information leading to the arrest of the suspects.

On Jan. 23, two armed men attempted to rob Hong's Market in San Vicente. The suspects ran away when the son of the cashier confronted the suspects.

Five other armed robbery occurred in January on Saipan. ***(Ferdie dela Torre)***

NEWS BRIEFS

Submission deadline for poetry competition

The NMI Council for the Humanities wishes to remind junior high and high schools that the deadline for submitting poems for the Fifth Annual Valentine Sengebau Poetry Competition is 4pm on Feb. 22.

This competition is an annual event sponsored by the Council to promote poetry as a literary form in the Commonwealth.

Participating students will recite their poems during a final event to be held at the Visitors Center Theater, American Memorial Park at 6:30pm on Feb. 28.

First place winners in both the junior and senior divisions will have their names inscribed on perpetual trophies and will receive cash prizes. Second and third place finishers will also receive cash prizes.

Poems may be dropped off at the Council's office in the Kings' Plaza building in Dandan or faxed to 235-4786.

Interested schools are encouraged to contact Council staff at 235-4785 or consult the Council's website http://nmihumanities.org for additional competition information. ***(PR)***

Comments sought on new hazardous waste regs

There will be a meeting on Thursday, Feb. 28, 2008 for individuals or companies that have questions about the proposed CNMI Hazardous Waste Regulations. This meeting is open to the public and will be held at the DEQ conference room located on the 2nd floor at 9am.

These regulations supersede the Hazardous Waste Management Regulations, which were adopted in 1984 and are now obsolete. The proposed Hazardous Waste Regulations, published in the Jan. 31, 2008 Volume 30, Number 01 supplemental publication of the Commonwealth Register, are intended to address the potential for environmental contamination resulting from hazardous waste.

The Hazardous Waste Regulations are available online at http://www.deq.gov.mp/section.aspx?secID=15 . Interested individuals may also view a copy at the DEQ offices located at the Gualo Rai Center, Chalan Pale Arnold.

Comments on the proposed regulations are due on or before April 2, 2008. Comments may be emailed to environment@deq.gov.mp but written comments are preferred.

For more information about the proposed regulations, contact David Chargualaf or Jim Callier at 664-8500 or 8501. ***(DEQ)***

Bordallo marks passing of Abbate, Lantos

HAGATNA,Guam—Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo issued the following statement Monday on the death of retired Superior Court of Guam Presiding Judge Paul Abbate: "I join the people of Guam in mourning the passing of Judge Paul Abbate. Judge Abbate made his mark in Guam's judicial system and will always be remembered for his contributions to the church and the community. My thoughts and prayers are with his family as they heal from their loss."

Also, Bordallo issued a statement yesterday upon learning of the passing of her colleague, U.S. Rep. Tom Lantos of California: "Mr. Lantos was a towering figure in Congress on human rights issues. As the co-founder of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, Mr. Lantos was an advocate for democracy and a voice for oppressed people. He used his stature as a Holocaust survivor to call attention to human rights abuses worldwide. Mr. Lantos was a key supporter of H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act and he helped us pass this bill on the House floor. I offer my condolences to the family of Congressman Tom Lantos. He will be remembered for his many contributions to our nation." ***(PR)***

GIG Discotheque
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The Ultimate
Valentine Encounter
February 13, 2008 (Wednesday)
Door Opens at 9:00 pm
Join the Contests:
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~Red Obsession (Most Sexy Attire)
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LIVE ON STAGE: RATED R BAND
Emcee By: The Gorgeous "Nola"
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Bar & Grill
SHOW UP wearing RED ATTIRE & GET IN FREE with Welcome Drink!

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

'The Ultimate Valentine Encounter' tonight at GIG

A highly entertaining Valentine's event awaits patrons at GIG Discotheque tonight aptly billed "The Ultimate Valentine Encounter," showcasing "He Moves, She Moves" romantic dance contest for the couples and "Red Obsession" for those who are wearing sexy red attire. Doors will open at 9pm.

The party will also be showcasing the musical talents of the rejuvenated band called "Rated R". Partygoers would be assured of hearing their favorite hits, including love songs. The band's first set will start at 9:30pm and G.I.G. resident DJ Dr. J will be adding up to tonight's revelry by alternating with the live band act. Nola K Hix, former disc jockey of Power 99, will be emceeing the event. To spice up the night, there will be raffle draws and free entrance with a welcome drink for those showing up in Red Attire.

The event is sponsored by Aquarius Beach Tower Hotel and Hawaii Bar & Grill. ***(PR)***

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Soil erosion seminar at NMC today

The Northern Marianas College- Cooperative Research, Extension and Education Services is inviting all farmers, students, and the community to participate in a seminar on Watershed Management and Soil Erosion. The presenter is Prof. M. Golabi of the University of Guam.

The seminar will be held today, Feb. 13, 2008, at the CREES conference room, from 3:30pm to 4:30pm.

For more information, contact NMC-CREES at 234-5498 Ext. 1725. ***(NMC)***

MMAC Team Captains' meeting today

The Marianas March Against Cancer Committee will have a team captains' meeting today, Feb. 13, 2008, at 5:30pm at the Chamolinian Room of the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

The committee is inviting all current and previous team captains or their representatives to attend the MMAC Team Captains meeting so that important information can be discussed. Information on the upcoming 2008 Marianas March Against Cancer will be disseminated at the meeting.

MMAC is the signature fundraising event for the Commonwealth Cancer Association. All funds raised will be used locally. MMAC Committee members are also encouraged to attend the meeting so team captains and the community will be able to ask any questions they might have regarding this important event. For more information, email Chris A. Concepcion at chrisaconcepcion@gmail.com.

Free Tinian soil management workshop

There will be a Soil and Nutrient Management Workshop on Tinian this Thursday and Friday, Feb. 14-15, 2008, starting at 8:30am, at the Tinian DLNR Conference Room. The presenters are Dr. Mohammad Golabi and Dr. Craig Smith.

See COMMUNITY on next page

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

FEBRUARY 13, 2001

Teno junks changes to local preference law

Noting the impacts it may have on projects that are already out for solicitation, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio rejected legislative proposals to change portions of an existing law, which gives local businesses preference on bidding of projects below $5 million. While continued preference is given to local businesses which hold Commonwealth business license for three consecutive years, Senate Bill 12-83 eliminates the dollar value of government projects to which they can enjoy inclination.

Hotel occupancy rate grows 4 percent

Hotel occupancy rate increased four percent to 63 percent in the third quarter of 2000, intensifying upbeat moods created by the apparent growth of the Northern Marianas tourism industry in the first three months of last year. Analysts said this only shows the volatility of the travel sector and how easily can the rally of neighboring Asian economies affect economic and business conditions on the islands.

BOE power to formulate policies for PSS upheld

Governor Pedro P. Tenorio rejected last week legislation that seeks to overhaul significant aspects of public education, citing a need to reconsider several of the amendments raised under the proposed measure. The local chief executive noted that there are legal and policy concerns under the legislation that need further scrutiny by leaders from both chambers before it can be passed into law. Citing provisions in the CNMI Constitution, Mr. Tenorio said the Board of Education has the sole authority to formulate policies and take control over the Public School System.

FEBRUARY 13, 2002

Chamber: NMI jobs evaporating

An economic study in 1999 estimated that over 1,600 jobs would withdraw from the CNMI every year from 2000 until 2005. This eventuality has accelerated since it was presented, with local statistics showing a 27-percent drop in worker applications since last year. Saipan Chamber of Commerce President Richard Pierce pointed this out, underscoring the fact that "no one can produce jobs out of thin air," in response to appeals from lawmakers for the private sector to take in more local workers.

CPA hiring replacements for Guam National Guards

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has started hiring local residents who will be joining the Ports Police in preparation for the eventual termination of the contract with the Guam National Guard on March 28, 2002. The CPA yesterday started accepting applications and conducted lengthy interviews of local applicants wishing to join the ports authority's security force.

It'll rain goats and pigs on Saipan

Wild goats and pigs would be shipped out of Anatahan because they eat up over 75 percent of the island's forest and vegetation, the Division of Fish and Wildlife said. Anatahan, a 12.48-square mile island located north of Saipan and Farallon de Mendinilla, is now home to about 30 families, but more than a hundred families are expected to resettle in the area, according to Ed Guerrero, a consultant to Northern Islands Mayor Valentin Taisacan.

FEBRUARY 13, 2003

Rehab bandwagon gains speed

With several bank depositors-mostly Chinese-joining the courtroom gallery of Superior Court Presiding Judge Edward Manibusan yesterday, all parties in the Bank of Saipan receivership case expressed support for the institution's proposed rehabilitation, spurring high hopes of reopening the bank soon. After the hearing, bank receiver Antonio Muna said he expects the judge's approval of the rehabilitation plan within the next few days. Muna wants the bank to reopen within 30 days from the time the court approves the plan.

PSS students 'lost' in social studies test

Was it how the questions were framed or did it actually reflect what some of the students in the CNMI are NOT learning in school? The question arises after a recent pilot test for social studies, administered by the Public School System to measure its newly developed standards and benchmarks, showed some 6th grade students giving unusual answers, making teachers scratch their heads in perplexed wonder.

COMMUNITY

From Page 8

The Northern Marianas College community would like to invite the public to this free educational workshop. This informational session should prove useful to farmers, backyard gardeners, nurseryman and landscapers responsible for growing crops, ornamentals, turf grasses, pasture grasses, legumes and more.

Topics to be covered include an overview of Tinian soil characteristics, soil basics, sustainable soil management, soil and nutrient plant relations, irrigation systems, micro-irrigation systems, fertigation systems, composting, fertilizers, and organic fertilizers (animal manures). ***(NMC)***

MHS Class of '88 meeting

This is to inform the Class of 1988 of Marianas High School that there will be a meeting on Thursday, Feb. 21, 2008 at 7pm at the Kagman Community Center.

This is to update plans on the upcoming 20th class reunion. All classmates are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

For more information, contact Lillian Lizama Tudela at 287-3742 or Dennis Villagomez at 287-4689. ***(PR)***

Autism training for parents

There will be an autism training for parents on Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008, at the Aqua Resort Club.

The training will cover two concurrent sessions: "Helping Parents Increase Language Skills at Home" to be presented by Sheila Magee, M.S., and "Vocational and Transitional Challenges for Children with Autism" to be presented by Joel Arick, Ph.D.

Registration starts at 8:30am; sessions begin at 9am and will last until 12pm. ***(PR)***

2007 1120-CM Forms released Friday

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI businesses that the distribution of the 2007 1120-CM Forms and Instructions will begin on Friday, Feb. 15, 2008 from 8am to 4pm at the Office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation, located at the Joeten DanDan Commercial Center. The 1120-CM Form and Supplemental Instruction are also available online at www.dof.gov.mp.

All businesses are asked to pick up the forms during the regular business hours. Tthe deadline for filing 2007 1120-CM Form is Monday, March 17, 2008 at 4:30pm. ***(DoF)***

Wellness Symposium for Parents

There will be a Wellness Symposium for Parents on Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008, at Saipan Southern High School, from 8am to 12pm. Lunch and refreshment will be served. ***(PR)***

Training for water operators

The Division of Environmental Quality has scheduled continuing education training for all certified water treatment and distribution operators on Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2008, from 8am until 12pm at the Aqua Resort Club.

In addition to the main topic, there will be short presentations about DEQ's new computer-based water operator testing.

Questions about the training should be directed to Jose Kapait, manager for the Safe Drinking Water Program at DEQ. His phone number is 664-8500 or 664-8501. ***(DEQ)***

LibDay booth concessions

The 2008 Liberation Day Committee is now accepting applications for the 2008 Liberation Day Carnival Grounds Booth Concessions. Interested individuals and/or firms may pick up an application at the Office of the Mayor of Saipan in the Afetnas Square in San Antonio.

As the number of booths will be limited, booths will be issued on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For more information, contact Concessions Committee chair Piding Tenorio at 287-8091. Deadline for submission of concession application is April 30, 2008 at the Saipan Mayor's Office.

Sailors volunteer for community projects

SANTA RITA, Guam—Sailors with the USS Nimitz Strike Group are conducting various community service projects while on Guam.

Sailors with USS Higgins and USS John Paul Jones provided support at Guma Mami Inc. and cleaned kennels and painted at Guam Animals In Need yesterday. Today, they will be cleaning and reorganizing at Island Girl Power, conduct site improvement and beautification projects at Erica's House, and complete village beautification projects at the Mangilao Mayor's Office. ***(USN)***

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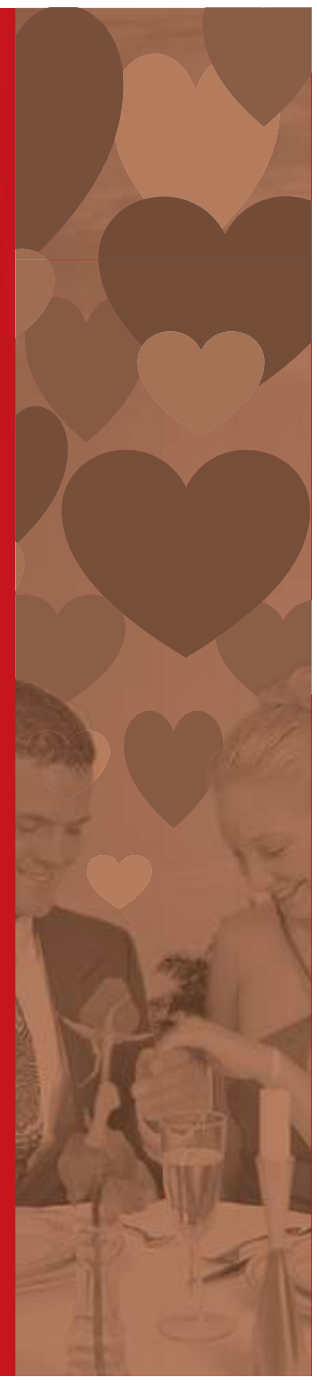

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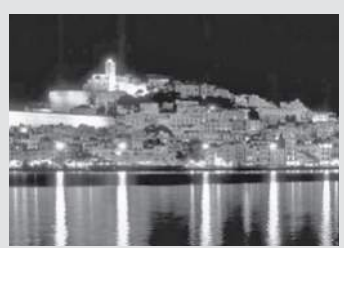

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Un-Olympian effort

Journalists across Hong Kong and Guangzhou are celebrating. Ching Cheong and Yu Huafeng, their local heroes, were at last released in the past few days after years in prison on trumped-up charges. China was right to release these two, but officials have much further to go before fulfilling the human rights commitments they made upon being awarded the 2008 Olympics.

Both men were freed around the Chinese New Year, a holiday akin to Christmas in the West, when everyone takes off from work and families get together for big, traditional meals. The reason for their early releases—years before their sentences were originally scheduled to end—is unclear. Family and supporters had been heavily lobbying for their freedom, particularly around holidays when they thought the government might be more amenable. The concession seems to have been intended to cultivate some goodwill among critics in Hong Kong and southern China—in particular, the many journalists who had taken up these men's causes. Hong Kong journalists enjoy more media freedoms than their mainland counterparts, and Mr. Yu's mainland paper has a reputation for defying state censors.

Unfortunately, any goodwill gleaned from the release of these men is canceled out by Beijing's inhumane treatment of many other dissidents in recent weeks. Within 24 hours of Mr. Ching's arrival home in Hong Kong, another brave journalist and outspoken critic of government corruption was sentenced to four years in prison for subverting the state. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Lu Gengsong joins at least 25 other journalists who remain behind bars for lawfully doing their jobs, as well as countless other human rights activists who have been arrested on bogus charges.

The best way China can build up goodwill—and honor the promises it made before the Olympics—would be to release all these political prisoners. If the Communist regime won't do that to build goodwill, perhaps they will do so to avoid embarrassment. We urge President Bush and other world leaders to demand the release of dissidents as a condition of their attendance in Beijing in August.

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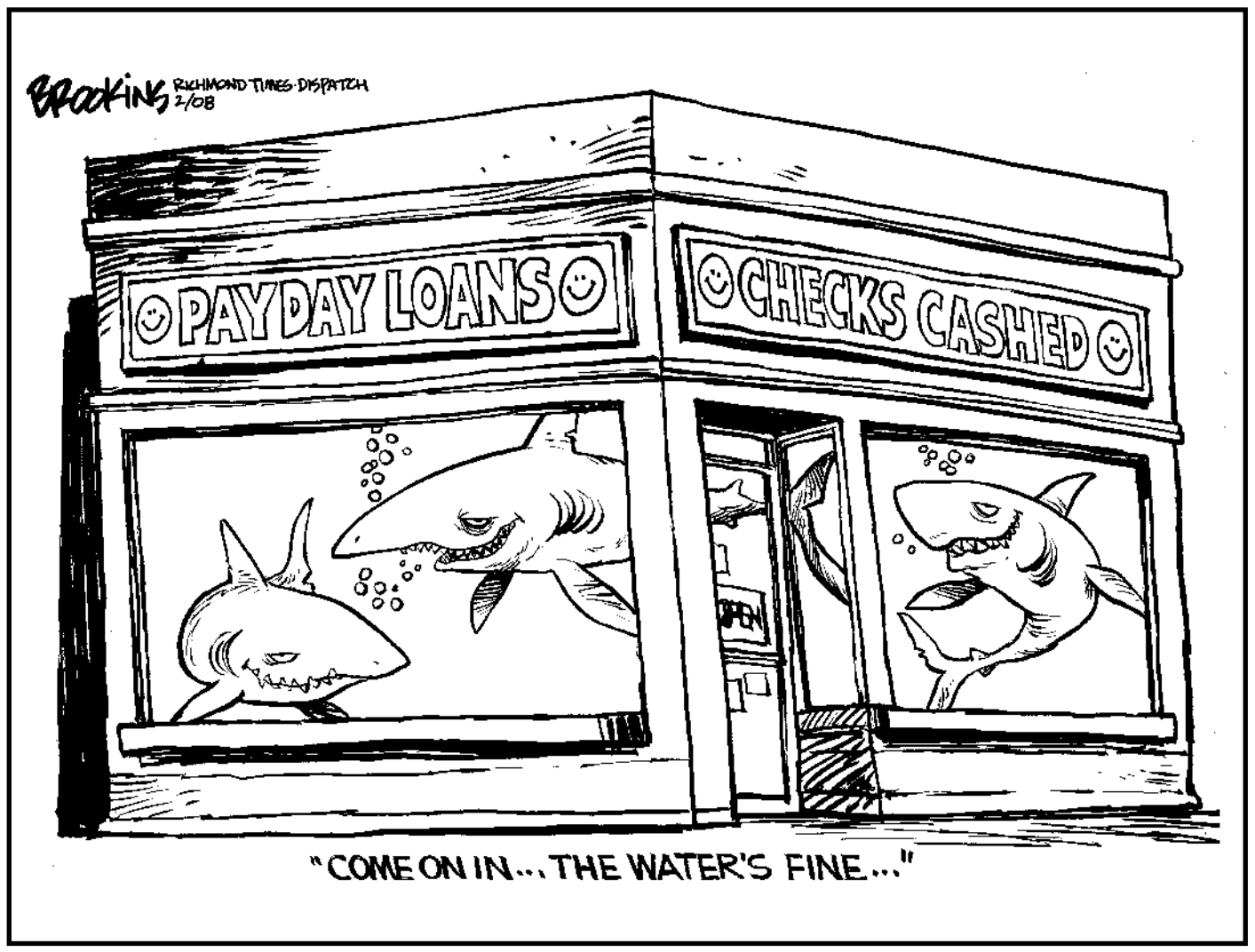


Interview with a Passion Prophet

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT *Creating economic success for the CNMI*

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

Today's column finds me on the receiving end of the questions for the Saipanpreneur profile. JetSetLiving's Anne C. provided the questions. Here are the highlights.

Anne: *I absolutely LOVE the idea behind PassionProfit. I, too am a firm believer in taking control of your own destiny… I'm sure your philosophy on life had a lot to do with your initial idea for PassionProfit… but, then how did you go about turning the idea into a reality?*

Walt: In truth, when I wrote my first book in 1992, the "Turn Your Passion Into Profit" concept didn't even exist in my mind or anyplace else. The concept—around which I've now built the company, coaching practice, website and my Passion Prophet identity—didn't really come into being until my 9th book in 2000. However, once the concept was born (as a result of a conversation with a business associate named Sidney Witten, in Washington DC), then everything else I had been doing, and everything since, took form around it. So, in essence, it's been a 10-year journey of change and metamorphosis that has brought me to where I am today.

Anne: *Have you always been self-employed or did you ever work for someone else? Do you have any kind of degree? If so, how useful, do you find your college education to be in your work? Do you think university prepared you to be an entrepreneur? If you could go back and change your education, what would you add or subtract?*

Walt: No, I haven't always been self-employed. I went to school for engineering, (Columbia University in New York), graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Civil Engineering, worked in the corporate world for seven years, in fact, until I jumped out on my own.

Has my education helped me? I've thought about that quite a lot. My overall philosophy in life is that once you discover your passion, then you'll realize that everything you've ever done in life happened in order to prepare you for the optimal expression of that passion. So, while I didn't recognize it at the time, the discipline, attention to detail, independence and everything else associated with my engineering background and the college experience has definitely prepared me for being an entrepreneur. Everything is a stepping stone in a continuing journey, or a brick you lay toward the ultimate structure. So based on that philosophy, the concept of changing something in the past isn't what it's all about. Life is about forward motion. Everything that happens to you, whether you realize it in the now or not, works for your ultimate good. The trick is to constantly seek the interpretation of current circumstances that supports that belief. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy, so to speak. When you believe that everything that happens is moving you closer to your goals, then you always look for the interpretation that supports the belief. The interpretation then becomes the reality. You've got to believe it to see it.

Anne: *Sort of like visualization in reverse, which actually makes a lot more sense. How long have you been in business and when did you decide to go dot.com? Once you decided to put your business up on the web, what steps did you take to accomplish this? How long did it take to get your website "live?"*

Walt: I guess you could say I've been in business since 1989 when I started my first record label. One thing I'd like to emphasize to anyone reading this is the need to be flexible in your self-concept. My "company" started out as a management company, then a record label, then a publishing company, and then ultimately what it is today (some unique combination of e-publisher, info-preneur, public speaking, coaching and consulting company!) Had I not been open to going with the flow, I might not have transformed myself and my company into what it is today. Having said that, I decided to go "web" in 1997. That was just at the beginning of the web frenzy, and Pascal Antoine, a good friend (and incidentally, one of the artists on my label), gave me my introduction to the web and gave me a book called *Teach Yourself HTML in a Week*. Once I fully grasped what the web was all about, and went through the trial-and-error learning curve, I would say it took about a week or two before I was able to go "live". It's been a process with constant revision ever since. These days, I can conceive, design and launch a site as quickly as it takes for the URL to resolve throughout the net. My record so far, from conception to making a sale is 72 hours.

Anne: *Which website is your best earner?*

Walt: The best earner is HipHopBiz.com. That's the site on which

See INTERVIEW on next page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

The importance of early childhood education

Recent reports on SAT scores indicate that our school system is still making progress with educating our students. Teachers and administrators should be commended for their continuing efforts for enriching these children.

Little is known about the profession of teaching except that it teaches. Not a whole lot of people appreciate the dedication that is required in developing wholesome and effective instructions for students. Teaching, perhaps, is the most emotionally, psychologically and financially-consuming profession an individual may undertake.

Here in the CNMI as much as most parts of the Unites States, our school system faces outside challenges, such as public policies, that compound unto the teachers and eventually, their students. A well known example is providing a proper budget. You may be asking, How does this affect students? With very little money, a teacher must become creative or inventive to keep their methods thrifty yet, just as effective as the highly priced ones. I've seen teachers modify their lesson plan so much; their instruction looked very dissimilar from the original design. Most of time, the gist is explained but the entire concept is not taught. There hasn't been a teacher that I've visited that had to fork out personal money just to finance lesson plans.

Our community does very little to help those who help our children. We have failed miserably to make education a priority. We have regarded education as just another social expenditure where programs can be eliminated or unfunded. It should not be viewed that way at all. The direction where assistance is directed toward is a little misplaced. Budget adequacy remains the most pressing matter for the school system but we must shift our attention directly into the classroom and not how to recruit and maintain Highly Qualified Teachers (don't get me wrong, it's just as important).

The community can provide valuable service and assistance to our teachers if recognition of the daily challenges are confronted, which brings the purpose of this message. Illiteracy (basic reading and writing skills) is a leading cause for student struggles and failures. It is not because teachers are without teaching skills or students are without learning skills. Large part of the blame is on ourselves as we fail to recognize that learning begins at birth. We must nurture that concept and use it to our advantage and mandate Pre-Kindergarten education.

Head Start has done a wonderful job at providing education to children under age of five. PSS is on the right track by recognizing the need to have such a program, hence adopting a pre-school policy (policy number 6272) although it's contingent to funding. Still, 6272 is a policy worthy of praise. Through legislation, mandating early childhood education will provide teachers with more time to adjust their instructional strategies to complement students learning styles rather than focusing and developing basic literacy skills for those lacking it.

Investing in early childhood education has immediate and long-term positive impacts on society: Single mothers become more independent or seek post-secondary education, young mothers are more inclined to return to or complete school, higher passing rates in national-level standardized tests and lower grade retentions, less social problems, learn the consequences of delinquency, or simply develop a highly educated workforce—we all look forward to having a highly educated workforce.

Head Start, kindergarten, and other privately operated preschool programs are not new to the CNMI as they have been actively servicing the Commonwealth. Absent a policy, however, parents can still choose not to enroll their children in these programs and in result, their children are likely to face additional struggles that those with pre-primary education experience normally wouldn't. The PSS have already developed standards and benchmarks to educating younger students. The community must understand that the results of investing in early education are only positive. We must appreciate and recognize the importance of early childhood education. We have one shot at making the future right. Early childhood education should not be an option.

Alvin K. Atalig
As Lito

A. Samoa also bans scuba spearfishing

The CNMI is not the only jurisdiction in the Pacific to ban the practice of scuba spearfishing. American Samoa has had a ban in place since 2001 and I'm fairly sure there are other countries in the Pacific that also have a ban on this type of practice—although I'm not 100 percent sure. Australia, if considered part of the Pacific, is one such country I know of.

Also, while the use of scuba-spear has probably been the single most important cause of the decline of the Napoleon wrasse worldwide, this isn't necessarily the case in all areas. I'd say snorkel-spearfishing in general is even more important. Using scuba is certainly more efficient but not as widely practiced or practiced for so long. Nonetheless, congratulations to CNMI for their ban and conservation efforts.

Ben Carroll
Dept. Marine Wildlife Resources
Pago Pago, American Samoa

INTERVIEW

From Page 10

I offer "how to" information for aspiring music industry professionals, Hip Hop artists, producers. There's a lot of interest among the younger generation to duplicate the success they see in the music videos. The music industry has always had a mystique and appeal about it. With zero advertising, people find us and purchase the products. It's now the site with the most active community.

Anne: *How has having a website impacted your business? Has it made your life easier or more complicated? In what ways?*

Walt: Life is DEFINITELY easier! I don't have to tell your readers all the benefits, reach and efficiency that the Internet provides. I'll give just one recent example. After years of programming my sites myself, I was introduced to a web programmer based in India. Unless either one of us travels to the other's country, we may never actually see each other, but we can communicate, exchange files, transfer funds, and do business through the web. I have customers in countries I've never advertised in, business partners in industries I know nothing about, and employees whom I may never meet.

It's freeing. If you're not comfortable with the technology, then it may seem complicated or may be intimidating, but, for me, it allows me to live the exact lifestyle I've always envisioned: to be able to spend my days doing just about anything I desire (like going to see movies in the middle of the day), while knowing that my business is running efficiently and generating profit without my direct involvement.

Anne: *How do you handle things like health insurance and retirement benefits?*

Walt: I don't. I know this may sound odd to some of your readers, but I'm too much in the "now" to focus on retirement, and as a practicing health-empowered vegan, I'm not trapped or held for ransom by the belief that my health comes from little colored pills, radiation treatment, antibiotics or steroids. Maintaining health is much, much easier than we've been led to believe. I know what causes dis-ease. I know that there's only one disease known to mankind. And, more importantly, I know how to cure it.

Anne: *Wow, of course with a lead in like that, I have to ask… what exactly is "dis-ease?" And what is the one disease known to man and how do you cure it?*

Walt: Funny you should ask, hehe! That's topic could fill an entire book—several actually—by itself. I'll make it short. The only illness known to man is some form of constipation—some form of blockage. In other words, there's something INSIDE that shouldn't be there, and the BODY does things to bring it OUTSIDE. Now, the body has the ability to heal itself. With the right nourishment, and left to its own methods, the body has its own internal intelligence and methods of healing. Most of the symptoms we associate and call "illness" are actually the body's attempts to purge, cleanse, and otherwise rid itself of whatever is upsetting the natural balance. It's the DISturbance of our body's EASE. Most Western medicine is focused simply on relieving symptoms rather than treating the root cause of the disturbance. So we get aspirins for headaches (a sure sign of internal toxicity), antihistamines for runny nose (body's flushing out mucous), pills to reduce fever (the body's attempts to burn out invaders), salves for skin eruptions (purging of internal toxicity through sweating) and so on. The solution: good nutrition (eating REAL food—no processed, denatured, genetically modified, boxed, canned, pasteurized stuff) and the occasional fast to give the body a chance to rest and shift into "cleanse" mode. Check out www.agelessadept.com for more.

Anne: *What's a typical day for you look like? How many hours would you say you put in?*

Walt: You said be honest, right? Well, practically every waking moment is consumed with thoughts of the next big thing! My business is my passion, my passion is my life, so I'm always engaged. Now don't get me wrong. I take time to go see movies in the middle of the day. I hang out with friends. But I'm so excited by what's happening in my life, that I'm always thinking, daydreaming, planning, projecting, envisioning, creating and on a quest!

Anne: *I know what you mean, I live, sleep, eat and breath my projects as well… always thinking of ways to improve things for my subscribers as well as for myself.*

What was your most successful promotion to date? (Please make sure to include the hows & whys in addition to percentages such as; "we had an increase in sales of 38%...)

Walt: I think that when an interview and review of my book appeared in *The Dallas Morning News* newspaper. We sold $4,000 in books within a few days of that single review in that daily newspaper. Check it out at www.passionprofit.com/dallasnews.html

Anne: *What has been most influential to your success? Did (do) you have a mentor or guide or did (do) you use the trial and error approach?*

Walt: Trial and error up until just recently. These last few months have been a significant departure from previous years. The most influential contributor to my success thus far, however, has been the training I received as a representative of a network marketing company.

Anne: *I've heard that so often, and have had the same experience myself… what was the most important lesson you learned from that phase in your life?*

Walt: I have this conversation ALL the time with my friends who were part of it. The ability to commit to a course of action and do what it takes to "make it happen!" It was a result of the training that I had the courage to walk away from my job at the time to pursue my passion full-time.

Anne: *What do you feel was the best business decision you ever made? (Feel free to include more than one).*

Walt: I may sound like a broken record, but the best business decision was to become a member of a network marketing company. Though not directly related to the current venture, what I learned has proven invaluable.

Anne*: Of course there are several things that make up a "successful entrepreneur" but one of those things is pretty black and white and that's the profit margin… What is your annual (or monthly) income? (If you feel uncomfortable answering this question exactly, please use approximations such as; above $50,000 a year or between $1,500 and $2,000 a month.) How have you seen this change since you went into business and what do you feel had the most impact on your income?*

Walt: I like to stay away from specifics for several reasons. One has to do with privacy. The other is because of something I learned while a sales rep. My mission is to encourage people to take the leap into pursuing their passion, and create the reality they desire. If I say I make $50,000 a year, one person may say, "only $50,000? That's not enough for me to support my family!" And they may end up being discouraged. Another person may say, "$50,000?!! Wow! I only make $15,000 and I work very hard now. To make $50,000 I'd probably have to work three times as hard! No way can I do that!" and they'll end up being discouraged. So, what I'll say is this:

1. Within 18 months of self-publishing my first book, back in '92, I was able to match my civil engineering income.

2. 80 percent of my income now comes from 20 percent of my websites, and

3. When I DO hit a million in gross annual sales, I promise to give you the exclusive interview!

Anne: *What kind of advice can you pass on to our readers?*

Walt: if I had to sum it all up concisely, I'd quote the Passion Profit Philosophy.

"Your Passion is part of your life's purpose.

You won't be completely happy until you pursue it.

Everyone has a passion.

Every passion has value.

You CAN turn your passion into profit!"

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit*. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com*

The Weather

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲81° ▼75°	▲82° ▼74°	▲81° ▼73°	▲80° ▼73°	▲80° ▼74°

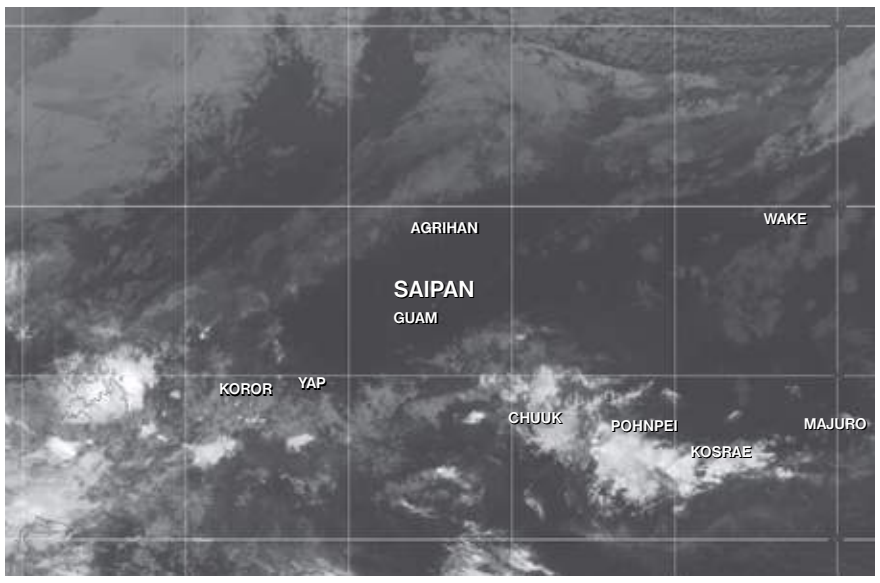
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲84	▼75
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲87	▼78
Yap	Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	▲88	▼81
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲88	▼78
Majuro	Sunny	▲85	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲73	▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲37	▼19
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲58	▼50
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲78	▼69
London	Mostly Sunny	▲54	▼37
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲69	▼52
Manila	Showers	▲84	▼72
Melbourne	Sunny	▲70	▼54
Miami	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼62
New York	Rain	▲43	▼27
Osaka	Cloudy	▲40	▼27
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲47	▼36
Pusan	Sunny	▲42	▼22
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲50	▼34
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲48	▼30
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲60	▼46
Seoul	Sunny	▲39	▼22
Tokyo	Sunny	▲45	▼36
Washington, DC	Rain	▲43	▼27

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, FEB. 12, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N165E to 22N153E. A warm front extends from 22N153E to a weak circulation centered near 22N142E. A cold front stretches from the circulation to 17N139E then continues as a shear line southwestward to 11N130E. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are occurring along and up to 200 miles north of the boundaries. A weak circulation is located near 5N130E. A near-equatorial trough runs southeastward from this circulation to end at EQ135E. Low-level convergence north of the trough is producing clouds and scattered showers across Palau and Yap between 5N and 10N from 130E to 140E. Convergent trade-winds are combining with divergent upper-level winds to generate scattered showers and a few thunderstorms within 150 miles of a line that stretches from 13N149E to 5N155E to 4N173E. This area includes Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and portions of the Marshalls.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
05:35AM Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
11:30AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
06:52PM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:43AM	6:20PM
Thursday	6:42AM	6:20PM
Friday	6:42AM	6:21PM
Saturday	6:42AM	6:21PM
Sunday	6:41AM	6:21PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:46AM	
Thursday	11:36AM	12:00AM*
Friday	12:31PM	01:04AM
Saturday	01:31PM	02:08AM
Sunday	02:34PM	03:10AM

*following day**

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 2, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily

Saipan-Manila

CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Saipan-Shanghai

MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6

Saipan-Beijing

CA 988	3:15am	7:00am	1,5

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Guam-Hongkong

CO 909	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily

Manila-Saipan

CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Shanghai-Saipan

MU 589	8:05pm	3:00am+1	1,5

Beijing-Saipan

CA 987	6:05pm	1:55am+1	4,7

Manila-Guam

CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Hongkong-Guam

CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

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  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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Letters to the Editor

In defense of Mr. Sasamoto

I would appreciate if you would print these comments concerning the Napoleon wrasse story published in the *Saipan Tribune* on Feb. 5, 2008. I was expecting the catch of two large Napoleon wrasse by a free diver to be a great story as it shows both a tremendous amount of skill by Mr. Sasamoto and that large Napoleon wrasse can still be found in Saipan waters. The last time I saw any large Napoleon's were back in the days when commercial SCUBA spear-fishing activities were active (and legal) during the early to mid 1990s.

However, I was disappointed that the anticipated upbeat theme of this story was dominated primarily by the negative opinions of others. Even the quotes from Mr. Sasamoto appeared more defensive than one would expect. The fact of the matter is that Mr. Sasamoto is probably one of a handful of individuals on Saipan that has the skill (and lungs) to free dive deep enough to spear these fish. And he accomplished this feat without breaking any fishing regulations! I believe Mr. Sasamoto should be considered a local role model for his accomplishment.

With regard to my specific concerns, several claims from the general public included in the article bothered me. Contrary to what was directly quoted, the Napoleon wrasse is not protected in Guam waters except, of course, in those areas designated as MPAs where fishing activities have been prohibited. And contrary to what was inferred, the CNMI has stricter near shore fishery regulations than Guam. In addition to area closures, such as MPAs, the CNMI has promulgated additional fishery regulations (i.e., gear restrictions) intended to lessen fishing pressure on many of our coral reef fish species, including the Napoleon wrasse. The first regulation to be promulgated was the prohibition against using SCUBA spear fishing. One immediate result of this regulation was the closure of the large-scale commercial SCUBA spear-fishing operations. This particular regulation indirectly created a "depth refuge" in near shore waters that were previously heavily fished and are inaccessible by the majority of our spear-fishers, except for Mr. Sasamoto and a couple of others. In addition, the DFW promulgated regulations that prohibited the use (with a few exceptions) of monofilament gill, surround and drag nets.

The second issue has to do with the claim that Japanese divers come to Saipan to specifically "swim with the wrasses," but is losing its tourist divers to Guam where the wrasses are protected. Since we know the Napoleon wrasse is not protected in Guam waters, this claim is baseless. Anyway, I thought that divers came to Saipan to swim with the eagle rays.

A more important underlying issue has been exposed with this recent debate, one that I consider an affront to Pacific Island traditions. This issue becomes painfully evident upon reading the condescending e-mails sent by certain government employees to Mr. Sasamoto condemning his decision to catch the two large wrasse. These individuals were irate with Mr. Sasamoto because he did not subscribe to their personal point of view, and attempted to make him feel guilty about his catch. In short, the e-mails stated the two wrasse should have been left (alive) for the diving community because tourism generates much more money over time than catching and selling fish. Their entire argument was based on the pursuit of the dollar and development of the (diving) tourism industry. I can only assume these people have very little respect for local cultural fishing practices. To me, this attitude is by far more damning than the legal capture of two large wrasse. It shouldn't surprise anyone that spear fishing without SCUBA from the shoreline is about as close to a traditional fishing practice as you can get. We should not forsake cultural island traditions just to make another dollar. The needs of other stakeholders must be respected and taken into consideration as they are just as important as diving tourists that bring in money.

To those enviro-extremists on island—you have successfully started alienating the very group of people whom you need support. Congratulations.

John Gourley
Navy Hill, Saipan

A response to Mr. Wicker

Mr. Willens asked me to respond to the letter from the Communications Director of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee published in the *Variety* on Feb. 8, 2008. Mr. Willens is still waiting for a written response from a Committee lawyer to his detailed analysis of the plain meaning of H.R. 3079.

It is clear that Mr. Wicker does not understand H.R. 3079. It establishes a permit system under which each employer in the Commonwealth must have a permit in order to hire a nonimmigrant foreign worker. It does not matter whether the foreign worker is presently in the CNMI or enters under the H visa program. He or she cannot get a job unless the employer has a permit to hire a foreign worker for the particular job. Under the current bill, these permits must be reduced to zero by Dec. 31, 2013. If there is no extension of the transition period, the law would require the departure of more than 19,000 foreign workers currently working here.

Mr. Wicker's lack of familiarity with the legislation is also made clear by his suggestion that, after the termination of the transition period, "the nonimmigrant worker program under the INA will continue indefinitely, along with all of the provisions of the U.S. immigration laws." He seems to forget that by that time the CNMI will be subject to the national caps on H-1B and H-2B visas. If they are allocated proportionally to population, that will entitle the Commonwealth to 10 or fewer workers in each category, which would clearly fall far short of CNMI's labor needs.

Mr. Wicker's letter, however, did provide some new information. The Senate Committee has finally decided to write a Committee report regarding its recommendation that the Senate pass H.R. 3079. When the Committee decided last December to bundle this "non-controversial" bill with 50 or more other bills from the House of Representatives, there was no suggestion that the Committee would file a report explaining its action. Why is the Committee asking the full Senate to vote on a bill any day now without any explanation from the Committee as to what the bill means and what will be its impact on the Commonwealth's economy, citizens, and foreign workers?

Why should we be surprised? This is the same Committee that endorsed a bill based on the facts of 10 years ago, when Allen Stayman was in the Clinton Administration, rather than the situation existing today in the Commonwealth. This is the same Committee that requested a report from the Government Accountability Office and then refused to defer action until the GAO completed its work—now only a few months away. This is the same Committee that endorsed a House bill that is substantially different from the version considered by the Committee at its hearings in July 2007, without pausing to evaluate the changes made by the House of Representatives or asking for comments from the Commonwealth.

Charles P. Reyes Jr.
Press Secretary
Capital Hill, Saipan

Shock and dismay at NMC

This was the *Saipan Tribune*'s headline on Saturday. In that article President Carmen Fernandez is quoted as saying, "…we were shocked to receive the decision by the USDE to place NMC on show-cause." Perhaps it should be the CNMI public who should be shocked and dismayed that NMC appears to have such poor communication and understanding with WASC concerning accreditation.

In her letter to the editor on Sunday, Irene N. Tantiado quotes a WASC public statement as reading, "…(the) Commission's concerns include *'inadequate and unstable administrative leadership (and) inadequate faculty and staff.'"* Ms. Tantiado continues on in her article to express fears that NMC might shortly be shut down.

Only a few weeks ago, both of Saipan's newspapers reported on the resignation of Mr. Danny Wyatt, NMC's Dean of Academic Programs and Services. When asked about what President Fernandez had said regarding his resignation, Mr. Wyatt is quoted as saying, "She didn't say anything." Furthermore NMC is reported to have declined to comment on the resignation. The article went on to say, "The commission also raised concern about the quick turnover of presidents and deans, which has been occurring since 2000."

It appears quite odd that Mr. Wyatt has recently resigned without a single word from NMC. The timing could not be worse as it would appear to significantly jeopardize NMC's accreditation. Why has NMC failed to communicate with the public concerning this? What is the truth about Mr. Wyatt's resignation? Did he resign under duress? Was his contract simply not renewed (with or without cause?)? Is there some other reason? What, if anything, was communicated to WASC concerning his departure? Did WASC find out about it through the newspaper article? There appear to be many unanswered questions as the "ship is sinking."

What is going on at NMC? Isn't it time that the public be told the truth, and that NMC be placed under transparent and competent leadership? Is it the intent of the CNMI Legislature and public to have a healthy, vibrant and ongoing college? Who's willing to make the necessary commitment s and "pay the price?"

Perry Conner
As Matuis, Saipan

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Business

Oil prices jump on Chavez threat

NEW YORK (AP)—Oil futures shot higher for the third straight day Monday as concerns about potential supply disruptions overshadowed worries about the cooling economy.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez threatened Sunday to cut off oil sales to the U.S. as retaliation for court orders freezing assets belonging to Venezuela's state oil company. Exxon Mobil Corp. has gone after Petroleos de Venezuela SA in U.S., British and Dutch courts, challenging the nationalization by Chavez's government of a multibillion dollar oil project. A British court last week issued an injunction freezing as much as $12 billion in Petroleos' assets.

"If you end up freezing (Venezuelan assets) and it harms us, we're going to harm you," Chavez said. "Do you know how? We aren't going to send oil to the United States."

Mike Fitzpatrick, vice president of energy and risk management at MF Global LLC, said it was hard to weigh the comment.

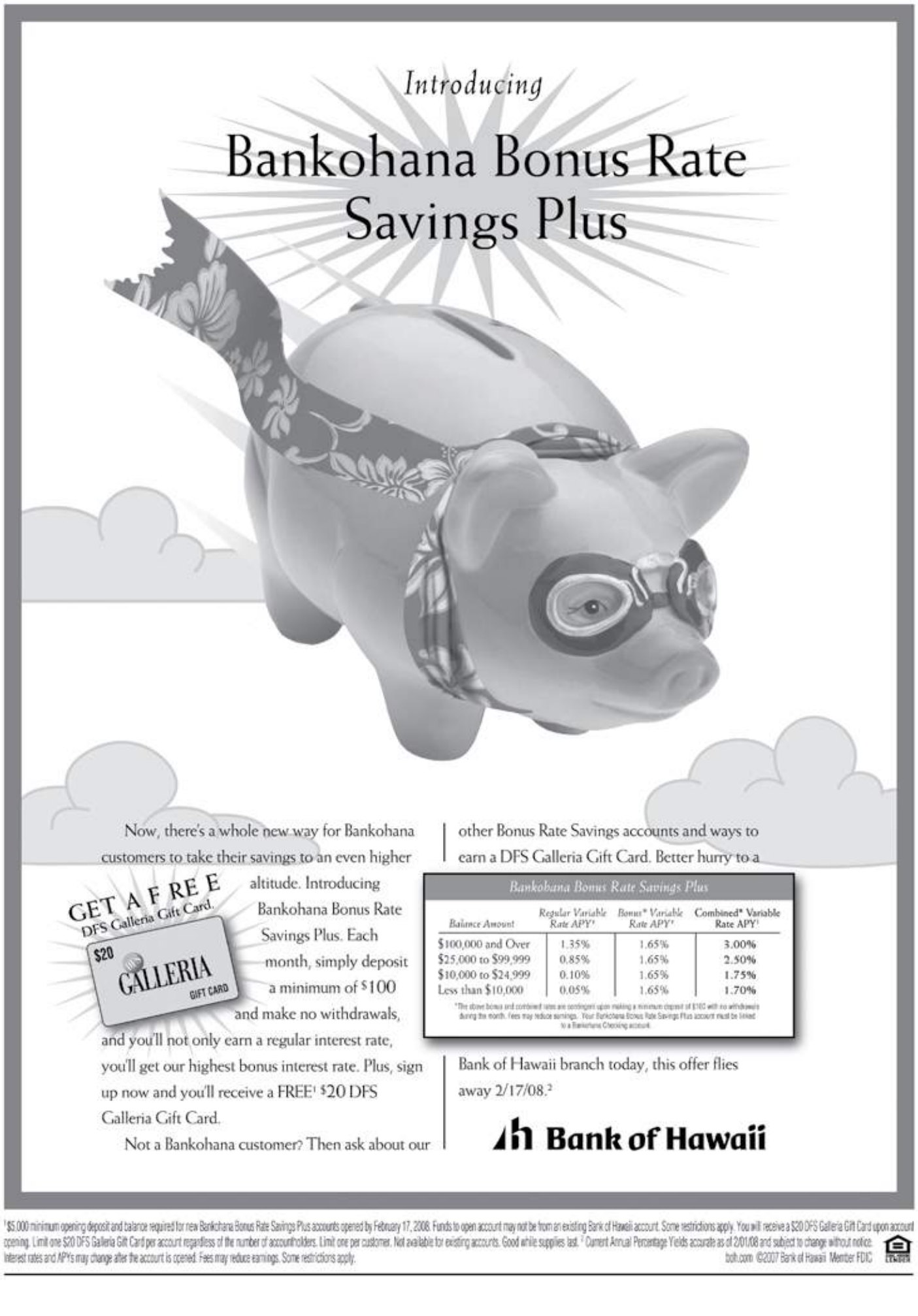
"How much credence you want to give him is always a question mark," Fitzpatrick said.

But traders were clearly worried about the potential cutoff of Venezuelan oil. Light, sweet crude for March delivery jumped $1.82 to settle at $93.59 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange after spiking to $94.72 earlier, a one-month high.

Word of power outages at a Valero Energy Corp. refinery in Delaware City, Del., and a Citgo Petroleum Corp. refinery in Lake Charles, La., also helped push prices higher. Both plants were being restarted Monday, Dow Jones Newswires reported.

Traders were unnerved by new violence in Nigeria, Africa's largest oil producer and a major supplier to the U.S. On Monday, unidentified gunmen attacked a naval vessel that was escorting petroleum industry boats, killing one sailor and injuring another. Militant attacks have cut Nigeria's oil output by nearly one quarter in the past two years, helping send oil prices to all-time highs.

Concerns about supply disruptions overseas have temporarily drawn investors' focus away from the weakening U.S. economy, which had been the market's dominant theme. Worries that the economy is slowing, and demand for energy is falling, pushed oil prices down from a record above $100 a barrel in early January to nearly $86 in recent weeks.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[1] $5,000 minimum opening deposit and balance required for new Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus accounts opened by February 17, 2008. Funds to open account may not be from an existing Bank of Hawaii account. Some restrictions apply. You will receive a $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card upon account opening. Limit one $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card per account regardless of the number of accountholders. Limit one per customer. Not available for existing accounts. Good while supplies last. [2] Current Annual Percentage Yields accurate as of 2/01/08 and subject to change without notice. Interest rates and APYs may change after the account is opened. Fees may reduce earnings. Some restrictions apply.
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Lawyer sentenced in kickback scheme

Lerach

LOS ANGELES (AP)—William Lerach, a former partner at a well-known New York law firm, was sentenced Monday to two years in federal prison for his role in a lucrative kickback scheme involving class-action lawsuits against some of the nation's biggest corporations.

Lerach, 61, was also sentenced to two years probation and 1,000 hours of community service. He was ordered to forfeit $7.75 million and pay a $250,000 fine.

"This whole conspiracy corrupted the law firm and it corrupted it in the most evil way," U.S. District Judge John Walter said during the hearing.

Authorities said Lerach's former firm, now known as Milberg Weiss, made an estimated $250 million over two decades by filing legal actions on behalf of professional plaintiffs who received kickbacks.

The firm paid $11.3 million in kickbacks to people who became plaintiffs in lawsuits targeting companies such as AT&T, Lucent, WorldCom, Microsoft and Prudential Insurance, prosecutors said.

BlackBerry service out in N. America

NEW YORK (AP)—A major service outage afflicted users of the popular, addictive BlackBerry smart phones across the United States and Canada on Monday.

Officials with AT&T Inc. and Verizon Wireless said BlackBerry maker Research in Motion Ltd. told them customers of all wireless carriers were affected.

It was not immediately clear how many of the 12 million worldwide BlackBerry subscribers had problems, as some users reported being able to access their service normally Monday afternoon.

But Garth Turner, a member of the Canadian Parliament, said during a caucus meeting that the incident—the second widespread disruption in 10 months—was having a big impact.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

New mortgage rescue goes beyond subprime

WASHINGTON (AP)—With mortgage defaults surging and politicians urging the industry to do more, six lenders agreed to widen their effort to help borrowers of all loans—not just subprime. The plan, called Project Lifeline, is to be announced Tuesday by the Treasury Department and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a person familiar with the plan said Monday evening, confirming earlier news reports and speaking on condition of anonymity because it had not yet been made public. The plan will allow seriously overdue homeowners to suspend foreclosures for 30 days while lenders try to work out more affordable loans are worked out.

Yahoo rejects Microsoft's takeover bid

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Yahoo Inc.'s rejection of Microsoft Corp.'s unsolicited takeover bid left investors guessing the next move in a tense mating dance that may hatch a more imposing challenger to Google Inc. or disintegrate into a bruising brawl. The rebuff, formally announced early Monday, wasn't a surprise because Yahoo had leaked its intention over the weekend. As expected, Yahoo's board unanimously decided to spurn Microsoft after concluding the offer—originally worth $44.6 billion or $31 per share—"substantially undervalues" one of the Internet's prized franchises. The cash-and stock deal is now valued at about $40 billion, or $28.91 per share, because of a drop in Microsoft's market value.

Stocks rise in uneasy trading

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street finished higher in an uneasy session Monday as retail and homebuilders stocks rose on expectations for more interest rate cuts, but banks and insurers fell on worries about further mortgage debt troubles. The Federal Reserve has been in rate-cutting mode this year and it is expected to lower the federal funds rate once more either this month or at its next regularly scheduled meeting March 18. The Dow rose 57.88, or 0.48 percent, to 12,240.01. Dow Jones & Co. said it was replacing two of the blue chip index's 30 components—Altria Group Inc. and Honeywell International Inc.—with Bank of America Corp. and Chevron Corp., effective Feb. 19. Broader stock indicators ended higher, too. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 7.84, or 0.59 percent, to 1,339.13, and the Nasdaq composite index rose 15.21, or 0.66 percent, to 2,320.06.

Nation

FBI raids house in Chinese spy case

WASHINGTON (AP)—A Defense Department analyst and a former engineer for Boeing Co. were accused Monday in separate spy cases with helping deliver military secrets to the Chinese government, the Justice Department said.

Additionally, two immigrants from China and Taiwan accused of working with the defense analyst were arrested after an FBI raid Monday morning on a New Orleans home where one of them lived.

The two cases—based in Alexandria, Va., and Los Angeles—have no connection, and investigators said it was merely a coincidence that charges would be brought against both on the same day.

The arrests mark China's latest attempts to gain top secret information about U.S. military systems and sales, said Assistant Attorney General Kenneth Wainstein. He described China as "particularly adept, and particularly determined and methodical in their espionage efforts."

"The threat is very simple," Wainstein said at a Justice Department news conference in Washington. "It's a threat to our national security and to our economic position in the world, a threat that is posed by the relentless efforts of foreign intelligence services to penetrate our security systems and steal our most sensitive military technology and information."

An official at the Chinese Embassy did not immediately respond to a request for comment. In China, it was a national holiday and calls to the Foreign Ministry's Information Department and to a duty officer cell phone number were both answered by voice mail.

In the first case, prosecutors said weapons systems policy analyst Gregg W. Bergersen, 51, of Alexandria, Va., sold classified defense information to a New Orleans furniture salesman. In return, the salesman, a Taiwan native identified as Tai Kuo, a 58-year-old naturalized U.S. citizen, forwarded the information to the Chinese government.

The data outlined every planned U.S. sale of weapons or other military technology to Taiwan for the next five years, prosecutors said.

US charges six for roles in 9/11 attacks

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Pentagon has charged six detainees at Guantanamo Bay with murder and war crimes in connection with the Sept. 11 attacks. Officials said Monday they'll seek the death penalty in what would be the first capital trials under the terrorism-era military tribunal system.

"These charges allege a long term, highly sophisticated, organized plan by al-Qaida to attack the United States of America," Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Hartmann, the legal adviser to the tribunal system, told reporters. He said a total of 169 charges were sworn against suspects "alleged to be responsible for the planning and execution of the attacks" in 2001 that killed nearly 3,000 people.

Hartmann said the six include Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the suspected mastermind of the attacks in which hijackers flew planes into buildings in New York and Washington. Another hijacked plane crashed in the fields of western Pennsylvania.

The military wants the six tried together before a military tribunal. But the cases may be clouded because of recent revelations that Mohammed was subject to a harsh interrogation technique known as waterboarding—which critics call torture.

Huckabee brushes off call to bow out of race

WASHINGTON (AP)—Against overwhelming odds, Mike Huckabee keeps brushing off calls to drop his presidential bid for the good of the Republican Party. The former Arkansas governor and ordained Baptist minister is following in the footsteps of past spoilers such as Republican Ronald Reagan in 1976 and Democratic Sen. Edward M. Kennedy in 1980, who both pressed uphill primary challenges to the limits.

Huckabee

Some GOP sages suggest it's hard to quit while you're still winning races, as Huckabee is doing, despite the mathematical reality of the delegate count. But then Huckabee likes to brag that he "didn't major in math, I majored in miracles," and he asserted anew on Monday his intention to stay in the race.

In those earlier challenges, the frontrunners were sitting presidents. Both President Ford in 1976 and President Carter in 1980 went on to lose their reelection bids, clearly weakened by the divisive primaries.

ACROSS THE NATION

Clinton not ready to release tax returns

WASHINGTON (AP)—Resisting calls from Barack Obama to release her income tax returns, Hillary Rodham Clinton said Monday she would only do so if she secures the Democratic presidential nomination and contended her rival had been less than candid about his relationship with major campaign contributors. In a televised interview Monday with Politico.com and local television station WJLA, Sen. Clinton said her financial holdings had been disclosed in her Senate ethics filings and that she had liquidated all her assets when she became a presidential candidate so her investments would not present a conflict of interest. After the former first lady acknowledged she had lent her campaign $5 million in personal funds, Sen. Obama suggested she release her tax records as he has done to give voters a better accounting of where her money comes from.

Ex-cop testifies he swung at lover

CANTON, Ohio (AP)—A former police officer accused of killing his pregnant lover sobbed on the witness stand Monday that he accidentally struck her when she wouldn't let him out of her house. "I didn't mean to hurt her," Bobby Cutts Jr. testified, clutching a handful of white tissues. Cutts, 30, said he was at Jessie Davis' home to pick up his 2 1/2-year-old son Blake and was telling her to hurry. He said that when she didn't move quicker to get her son ready, he started to go but Davis grabbed him and told him he couldn't leave. He said he pulled his arm away and threw his elbow back, striking her in the throat and causing her to fall. "I didn't mean to hurt her," Cutts sobbed as he clutched at a handful of white tissues. Cutts could receive the death penalty if convicted of killing Davis.

Record cold for northern Minn.: 40 below

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—It lived up to its name: The temperature in International Falls fell to 40 below zero Monday, just a few days after the northern Minnesota town won a federal trademark making it officially the "Icebox of the Nation." It was so cold that resident Nick McDougall couldn't get his car trunk to close after he got out his charger to kick-start his dead battery. By late morning, the temperature had risen all the way to 18—below zero. Residents of the area use electric engine block heaters to keep their cars from freezing. The previous record low for Feb. 11 in International Falls was 37 below, set in 1967, said meteorologist Mike Stewart at the weather service in Duluth.

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*Some conditions apply. 24-month agreement required. Must sign up for Unlimited Local SMS at $5.95 per month. Offer valid from February 5, 2008 to February 15, 2008 or while supplies last.

World

Afghan governor survives bombing attack

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—The governor of an important and volatile southern province in Afghanistan escaped an apparent assassination attempt Monday after a bomb exploded by his vehicle convoy, officials said.

The bomb, aimed at the convoy of Kandahar Gov. Asadullah Khalid, wounded three civilians, Khalid's office said in a statement. Khalid was not wounded, it said.

Kandahar is the former stronghold of the Taliban movement and is a major producer of opium poppies. The province has seen fierce fighting involving U.S., NATO and Taliban forces the last two years.

Also Monday, the reclusive leader of the Taliban said through a spokesman that the Islamic militia is not a threat to other countries and called on citizens of NATO nations to pressure their governments to withdraw troops from the country.

Mullah Omar said the U.S. military has failed in Afghanistan and that is why the Pentagon is pressuring other NATO countries to send more troops, Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid quoted Omar as saying. Mujahid has spoken on behalf of Omar previously, though the validity of his statements could not be verified.

Pakistan's army, meanwhile, said its troops critically wounded and captured a top Taliban official after a gunbattle near the country's border with Afghanistan. The army said Mansoor Dadullah and six other militants were caught after crossing into southwestern Pakistan.

US Marine accused of rape in Japan

TOKYO (AP)—A U.S. Marine accused of raping a 14-year-old girl in southern Japan was arrested Monday, police said, stirring memories of a rape of a Japanese girl by U.S. troops over a decade ago.

Police took custody of Staff Sgt. Tyrone Luther Hadnott, 38, of Camp Courtney in Okinawa, an Okinawa police official said on condition of anonymity citing policy. Hadnott, who has denied the allegations, has not been charged.

Under a mutual security pact, the United States has about 50,000 troops deployed around Japan. Most of them are based on Okinawa and tensions over potential accidents, land use and troop-related crimes are common.

WORLD BRIEFS

East Timor president in stable condition

DILI, East Timor (AP)—East Timor's president was in "extremely serious" but stable condition Tuesday after surgeons worked through the night to remove bullet fragments suffered in a failed coup attempt, the administrator of an Australian hospital said. Dr. Len Notaros, the general manager of the Royal Darwin Hospital, told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. Tuesday morning that three surgeons operated on President Jose Ramos-Horta for three hours overnight to remove the fragments and repair his wounds. "His condition remains extremely serious but by the same token, stable," Notaros said. Rebel soldiers shot Ramos-Horta in his home early Monday and separately attacked the prime minister, who escaped unhurt. The country's top fugitive,Alfredo Reinado, was killed in one of the attacks. Ramos-Horta, 58, was airlifted to a hospital in the northern Australian city of Darwin.

CBS: 2 journalists missing in Basra

BAGHDAD (AP)—Two CBS News journalists were missing in the predominantly Shiite southern city of Basra, the network said Monday. CBS said all efforts were under way to find the journalists, who were not identified by the network. It requested "that others do not speculate on the identities of those involved" until more information was available. Iraqi police said the journalists were taken away Sunday after masked gunmen entered the Sultan Palace Hotel in central Basra. The police spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to media. "CBS News has been in touch with the families and asks that their privacy be respected," the network added in a brief statement from CBS Corp. headquarters in New York.

Hamas leaders hiding from Israeli hits

GAZACITY,GazaStrip(AP)—Hamas leaders in Gaza turned off their cell phones, avoided public appearances and were sleeping in safe houses after Israel threatened Monday to assassinate those responsible for Palestinian rocket attacks on border towns. Defense Minister Ehud Barak warned that Israel could bring down the Hamas regime and he ordered plans for a large ground invasion of Gaza. But he said troops would not move soon, all but admitting that Israel has no quick answer for the rocket barrages and leaving his threats as mostly verbal pressure on Hamas. It was the first time a senior official hinted so strongly that Israel was prepared to overthrow Hamas if the Palestinians didn't do it themselves.

South Korea arrests man in landmark fire

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Police arrested a 70-year-old man suspected of setting a fire that destroyed the country's top cultural treasure, the 610-year-old Namdaemun gate in Seoul, news reports said early Tuesday. The man, identified only by his family name Chae, was arrested Monday night on Ganghwa Island, west of Seoul, the Yonhap news agency reported, citing an unnamed police officer. Cable news network YTN carried a similar report. The fire broke out Sunday night and burned down the wooden structure at the top of the Namdaemun gate, which once formed part of a wall that encircled the South Korean capital. Hundreds of stunned South Koreans gathered near the charred structure Monday night.

Ahmadinejad: Iran won't stop enrichment

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad struck a defiant tone as he spoke to giant crowds marking the 29th anniversary of the Islamic revolution Monday, vowing never to slow down nuclear development and announcing plans for more rocket launches in Iran's space program. Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators marched through the capital Tehran, chanting "Death to America" and burning effigies of President Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. The leader's speech before the crowd appeared aimed at showing an image of strength of his hard-line camp ahead of key parliament elections in mid-March.

Pakistani envoy to Kabul feared abducted

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan was missing and feared kidnapped as he traveled by road through a volatile Pakistani tribal region, state television reported Monday. Ambassador Tariq Azizuddin was heading to the Afghan capital, Kabul, from the Pakistani tribal district of Khyber when he disappeared, Pakistan Television quoted a foreign ministry spokesman as saying. Local government official, Muhammad Iqbal, confirmed Azizuddin was missing, but provided no further details. Iqbal said the ambassador was last heard from in Peshawar, the main city in northwestern Pakistan, at 11 a.m. and that there was no record of him at a Khyber checkpoint, indicating he likely disappeared before entering the district.

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Campus Life

Online courses aim to prevent dropouts

By JAY MATHEWS
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WASHINGTON—Jefferson Lara got into trouble soon after he started high school. His involvement in a gang fight while he was in ninth grade in Fairfax County, Va., knocked his plans askew. He was sent to a disciplinary program, spent a year with relatives in Peru and returned to Northern Virginia to stock grocery store shelves. His luck changed when he took auto repair classes and got a job offer from a Nissan dealer, but that wasn't going to happen unless he had a high school diploma.

So this year, the 18-year-old is enrolled in the Arlington Mill High School continuation program, an Arlington County, Va., initiative that offers not only classroom courses to help students get their degrees but also an online component that is becoming an increasingly important tool for educators to prevent students from dropping out.

By spending his school lunch periods in the Arlington Mill computer lab, Lara has nearly completed an online physics course; he'll take senior English online this spring. At the same time, he is also taking a handful of regular classes. The online courses will shorten the time it takes him to graduate.

Never comfortable with the high school routine, Lara said what he likes best about the online course, designed by Arlington-based Educational Options, is that there is no homework. "You can go at your own pace," he said. "Sometimes teachers go too slow or too fast, but here you can move any way you want."

Nationally, about 30 percent of students starting ninth grade drop out before graduation four years later. In low-income neighborhoods, the dropout rate is closer to 50 percent, which experts blame in part on large, impersonal, rule-bound schools that don't adjust well to individual needs and peculiarities. Online courses offer a more flexible approach.

"This is very important because in many cases, students are only lacking a few credits for graduation, but they simply won't stay in school to get them," said Jay Smink, executive director of the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University.

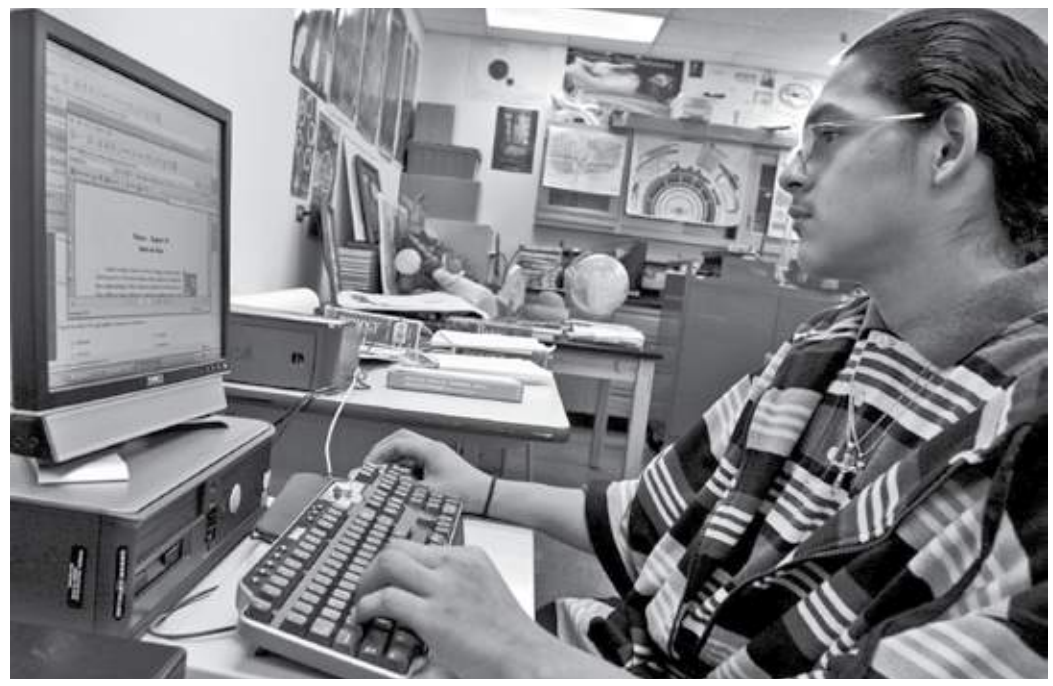
Barbara Thompson, administrator of Arlington Mill, said about 120 of the 320 students in her program are taking EdOptions courses. They might take only one course at a time, but a determined student can knock one off very quickly. "We had one student who came in and worked on a science course for 10 hours a day and got it done in a few weeks," Thompson said.

Thompson's school is in a neighborhood full of immigrants. Most of her students are 18 to 25. Eighty-five percent are Hispanic. Many of them find even the school's flexible approach difficult. Some students who show up in September will be gone by Thanksgiving, and more will leave after Christmas, in part because many of them can't read well enough to understand the courses.

Sharon Ruggieri, a science teacher who also oversees students such as Lara who take online courses, said reading comprehension has to be at about an eighth-grade level for the student to succeed. "I don't care what the setting is, online or regular classroom. If they cannot process the information that is coming in, they are not getting it," she said.

EdOptions is run by a former Air Force fighter pilot, Tom Sawner, whose company received a 2006 Small Business of the Year award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Sawner speaks passionately of his mission to help schools, although his and other for-profit online education companies also appear to be doing well financially.

Thompson said what she likes best about the EdOptions program is the independence it gives students. They read each chapter online, with meanings of difficult words available at a mouse click. Chapters end with a few dozen multiple-choice questions.



Jefferson Lara, 18, works on a physics assignment. Online courses offer a more flexible approach than large, impersonal, rule-bound schools, say experts.

THE WASHINGTON POST

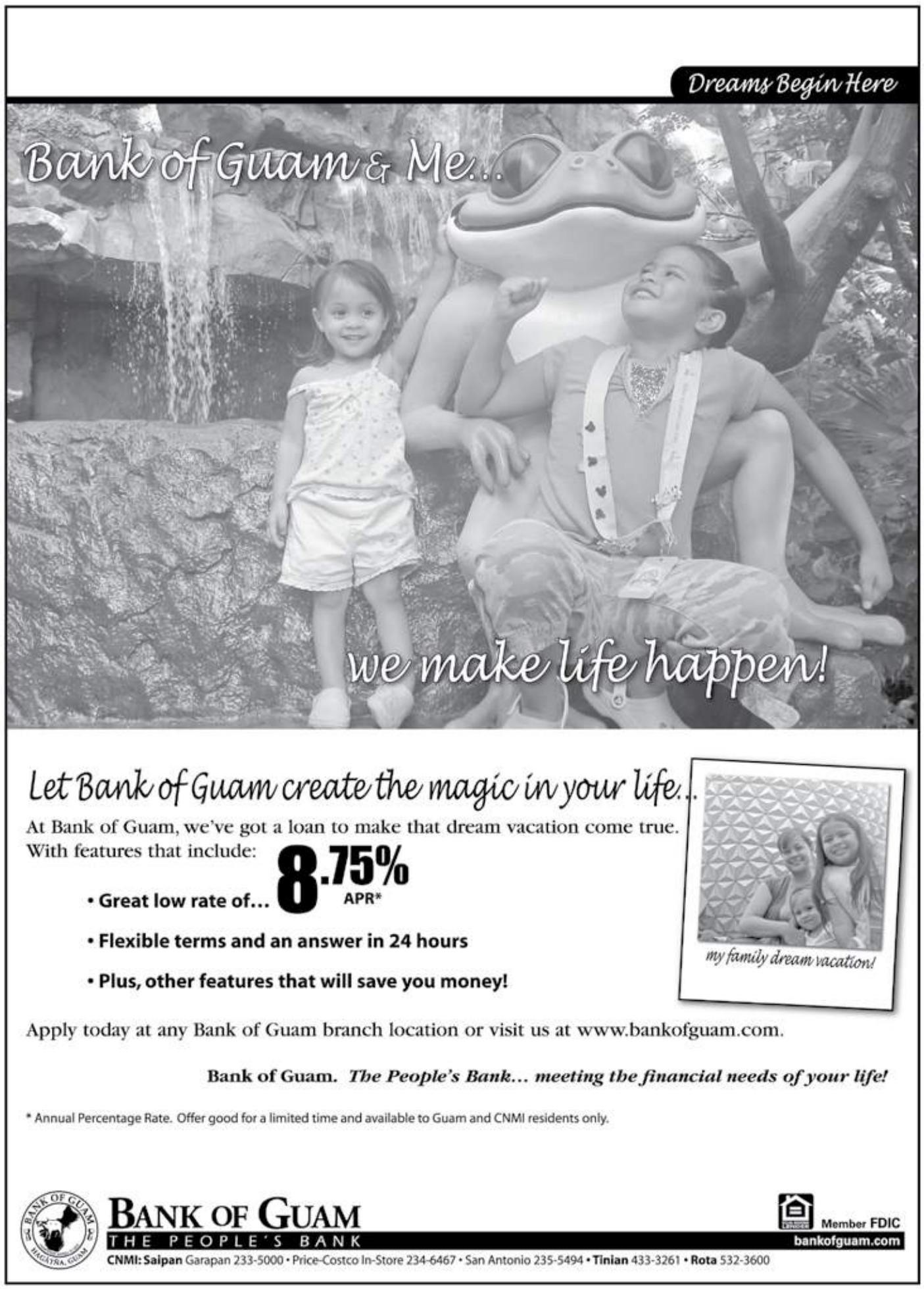
CAMPUS BULLETIN

Saipan Southern High PTSA meeting

Parents/legal guardian of Saipan Southern High School students are being informed that there will be a PTA meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008 at 6pm in the cafeteria. Please join us. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '83 meeting, birthday bash

Marianas High School Class of 1983 will be holding a very special meeting on Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008 at 4:30pm at the Kilili Beach Pavilion, Civic Center. This gathering will be to finalize attendees for the banquet night and also to celebrate Ed's birthday.
You may contact any of the Steering Committee members for details: Tonnei Camacho at 483-9665, Viola Kaipat at 483-0214, Ed Camacho at 483-5262, Jane Tudela at 234-9571, Frances Mildred Cruz at 483-0995, Ester Teregeyo at 285-6284, Ben Sablan at 287-1480, Diego Songsong at 287-4300. ***(PR)***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Life & Style

A community says farewell

A large cross-section of the CNMI community came together yesterday to pay their last respects to the late *Saipan Tribune* publisher, JP Pangelinan, who passed away on Feb. 5, 2008, after a long battle with lung cancer.

Hundreds of people gathered at the Mount Carmel Cathedral for the visitation, which started at 9am, and the Mass at 11am. Here are some pictures from the event.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Hundreds of people gather at the Mount Carmel Cathedral to pay their last respects.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, Patrick P. Tenorio, Edward Flores, Joaquin M. Pangelinan, Jay M. Pangelinan, John J. Pangelinan and Jerry Tan carry the casket of the late *Saipan Tribune* publisher, JP Pangelinan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Family members bid farewell to a fine man and a true gentleman, JP Pangelinan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Lisa Sablan and other relatives and friends give their final goodbyes to their dear JP Pangelinan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Lisa Christine Pangelinan and Ruth T. Sablan give their sincere appreciation to the crowd.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JP's son, John J. Pangelinan, and other family members cry as they remember fond memories of their beloved JP.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A child gives a goodbye kiss for her grandfather.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Tan Holdings Corp. president Jerry Tan embraces his dear friend and colleague, JP, for the last time.

Flower offerings decorate the entrance to the Mt. Carmel Cathedral Tuesday morning during the funeral Mass for the late Saipan Tribune publisher John "JP" Pangelinan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

It was an emotional moment for many inside the cathedral.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Close friends and relatives show their last respect for JP Pangelinan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JP's sons and daughters hold hands as they say a prayer during the Mass.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JP's grandchildren kneel during the Mass.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Bishop Tomas A. Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa blesses the casket of JP.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Mt. Carmel Cathedral rector Fr. Ryan Jimenez delivers the homily with members of the clergy.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

People gather inside the Mount Carmel Cathedral for the visitation.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JP's coffin passes the crowds of mourners inside the cathedral.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, Perry Tenorio and other family members carry the casket of the late Saipan Tribune publisher, JP Pangelinan.

JP's youngest daughter, Christie Leigh Sablan, gives a final goodbye kiss to her dad.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JP's sister, Sophia Tenorio, cries in front of her brother's casket.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

The funeral carriage of JP waits outside the Mt. Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa.

Gunmen grab $163M in art at Swiss museum

ZURICH, Switzerland (AP)—Three gunmen in ski masks and dark clothes burst into a museum just before closing time. After a quick run through the building, they hustled out the door and sped off with paintings by Cezanne, Degas, van Gogh and Monet valued at $163.2 million.

Authorities appealed Monday for any witnesses to help reconstruct the robbers' getaway from the E.G. Buehrle Collection, a private museum of Impressionist works whose founder had his own troubled history with stolen art.

"This is an entirely new dimension in criminal culture," police spokesman Marco Cortesi said, calling it the largest art robbery in Switzerland's history and one of the biggest ever in Europe.

The three robbers entered the museum a half-hour before its scheduled close Sunday. While one trained a pistol on museum personnel ordered to lie on the floor, the two others collected four paintings from the exhibition hall, police said.

The men, one of whom spoke German with a Slavic accent, loaded the paintings into a white vehicle parked out front. Police said the paintings may have been sticking out of the trunk as the robbers made their getaway.

A reward of $90,000 was offered for information leading to the recovery of the paintings—Claude Monet's "Poppy field at Vetheuil," Edgar Degas' "Ludovic Lepic and his Daughter," Vincent van Gogh's "Blooming Chestnut Branches" and Paul Cezanne's "Boy in the Red Waistcoat."

AP

Lukas Gloor, CEO of the E. G. Buehrle Collection, answers questions at a press conference in Zurich, Monday, Feb. 11, 2008, after an armed gang stole four paintings by major artists from the private museum.

The FBI estimates the stolen art market at $6 billion annually, and Interpol has about 30,000 stolen works listed in its database. But while only a fraction of stolen art is ever found, such thefts are rare because of intense police investigations and the difficulty of selling the works.

"It's extremely hard, if not impossible, to sell these works," said Michaela Derra of Ketterer Kunst GmbH, a Munich, Germany-based purveyor of modern and contemporary art. "Maybe they think they can blackmail the insurance (companies) and get money for the paintings in return. But this is all speculation."

Police said the museum had not received any such demand.

Steve Thomas, head of art law at Irell & Manella LLP's Los Angeles office, said it was unlikely the robbery was commissioned by a private collector looking to stash art in a secret location.

He thought the motive most likely would be an insurance ransom, a reward or leverage for someone who could be facing prosecution for even bigger crimes.

"As values have skyrocketed, art has become more of a target, and we are seeing more and more major art thefts around the world," he said.

But funding for art museums, particularly in security, has not kept pace, Thomas said. "Even with the best of museums, with the best of security, with guards standing there, people still manage to get away with the art."

Buehrle, a German-born industrialist who provided arms to the Third Reich during World War II, amassed one of Europe's greatest private collections in the aftermath of the war.

At least 13 of the art works he owned at war's end were included on British specialist Douglas Cooper's "looted art list," which was used to recover pieces stolen from Jews by the Nazis.

A five-year, Swiss government study released in 2001 said Buehrle had acquired an unknown amount of "flight art"—works smuggled out of Axis-controlled areas by Jews and sold at rock-bottom prices to avoid confiscation by the Nazis.

"We couldn't examine the flight art acquisitions of Emil G. Buehrle systematically," the study into Switzerland's wartime cooperation with the Nazis said. But it added: "In general, there was more flight art available than looted art" and this was reflected in collections such as Buehrle's.

Daniel Heller, author of "Between Company, Politics and Survival: Emil G. Buehrle and the Machine Tool Factory Oerlikon, Buehrle & Co. 1924-1945," said Buehrle repurchased 77 paintings after the war from a Jewish dealer, after the Swiss high court ruled the works had been stolen.

The museum's catalog refers to those pieces as "acquired in 1951 from a private French collection," Heller said.

Documents: Manager got car to Britney after her release

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Britney Spears' father sought to fire her business manager because he circumvented court orders by providing the pop star with a car after she was released from a psychiatric ward, according to court documents released Monday.

Manager Howard Grossman also violated court orders by arranging meetings for her when she was released from the hospital Wednesday against her parents' wishes, said papers filed by attorneys for James Spears, her temporary conservator.

The 26-year-old pop star was seen cruising around Los Angeles later that day in a Mercedes-Benz with a swarm of paparazzi on her tail.

"The temporary co-conservators have lost all confidence in their ability to work with Mr. Grossman," because of his conduct, attorneys for James Spears wrote in papers seeking to fire the manager. The papers were sealed until after Grossman was served.

Court Commissioner Reva Goetz gave Spears' temporary conservators the right to fire Grossman after a closed-door hearing Thursday in which they aired the allegations in the documents.

Grossman would not immediately comment on the documents when reached by The Associated Press. He has refused to say whether he was fired.

Jeryll Cohen, attorney for James Spears, said Grossman had been told that two of the troubled star's cars were to be delivered from a dealership to the singer's father, who was named temporary conservator of his daughter and her estate after she was deemed unfit to care for herself and manage her finances.

Grossman said he had one of the Mercedeses delivered to the hotel because his client requested it.

"Spears asked him to, and he wanted to comply with her request because he wanted to 'build her confidence in him,'" according to Cohen's declaration.

The delivery of the car violated a court order giving James Spears and attorney Andrew Wallet, the co-conservator of her estate, control of the singer's assets.

Grossman also arranged for Spears to meet with attorney Adam Streisand at the Beverly Hills Hotel in violation of court orders preventing Spears from meeting with any lawyer without her father's permission, according to the documents unsealed Monday.

Streisand unsuccessfully sought to represent Spears in court Feb. 4 when he argued that she told him by phone that she wanted her father removed as conservator. Goetz found that Spears lacked the capacity to hire her own lawyer.

Grossman said in an e-mail contained in the court records that some of the messages from Cohen were received after Britney Spears contacted him.

He said he rejected Spears' request to give her a credit card. Under the terms of the conservatorship, he was not permitted to give Spears any money or credit cards.

Trial begins over John Ritter's death

GLENDALE, Calif. (AP)—A lawyer for John Ritter's family told a jury Monday that he would show doctors caused the actor's death by an improper diagnosis and substandard treatment.

"What you'll hear, ladies and gentleman, is that ... they did everything wrong," attorney Moses Lebovits said in his opening statement at the trial in Los Angeles County Superior Court.

Ritter died of a tear in the aorta, known as an aortic dissection, on Sept. 11, 2003, at Providence St. Joseph Medical Center in Burbank.

Ritter's relatives say he was instead mistakenly treated for a heart attack, and they are suing two doctors for $67 million. The lawsuit follows settlements with the hospital and eight other medical personnel for about $14 million.

At the time of his death, Ritter was 54 and the star of the ABC series "8 Simple Rules ... For Dating My Teenage Daughter." The award-winning star of the sitcom "Three's Company" had a varied career, with credits ranging from TV's "The Waltons" to the 1996 movie "Sling Blade."

Amy Yasbeck, Ritter's widow, wept during parts of Lebovits' opening statement.

Lebovits claimed that a radiologist, Dr. Matthew Lotysch, failed to give Ritter warning of his purportedly enlarged aorta two years before he died, and that Dr. Joseph Lee, the cardiologist called to Ritter's side the night of his death, failed to order the proper tests to diagnose his condition.

Central to the case is the claim that Lee failed to have a chest X-ray done before treating Ritter for what appeared to be a heart attack.

Tolkien estate sues New Line Cinema

AP

This photo released by New Line Productions shows actors, from left, Dominic Monaghan as Merry, Elijah Wood as Frodo, Billy Boyd as Pippin and Sean Astin as Sam in a scene from New Line Cinema's "The Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring."

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The estate of "Lord of the Rings" creator J.R.R. Tolkien is suing the film studio that released the trilogy based on his books, claiming the company hasn't paid it a penny from the estimated $6 billion the films have grossed worldwide.

The suit, filed Monday, claims New Line was required to pay 7.5 percent of gross receipts to Tolkien's estate and other plaintiffs, who contend they only received an upfront payment of $62,500 for the three movies before production began.

The writer's estate, a British charity dubbed The Tolkien Trust, and original "Lord of the Rings" publisher HarperCollins filed the lawsuit against New Line Cinema in Los Angeles Superior Court. If successful, it could block the long-awaited prequel to the films.

Robert Pini, a spokesman for Time Warner Inc.'s New Line, declined to comment.

The films—2001's "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," 2002's "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers," and 2003's "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King"—have reaped nearly $6 billion combined worldwide, according to the complaint.

The estimate includes everything from box office receipts to revenue from sales of DVDs and other products.

The plaintiffs seek more than $150 million in compensatory damages, unspecified punitive damages and a court order giving the Tolkien estate the right to terminate any rights New Line may have to make films based on other works by the author, including "The Hobbit."

Such an order would scuttle plans by New Line to make a two-film prequel based on "The Hobbit." "Rings" trilogy director Peter Jackson has already signed on to serve as executive producer on the project, which is tentatively slated to begin production next year, with releases planned for 2010 and 2011.

"The Tolkien trustees do not file lawsuits lightly, and have tried unsuccessfully to resolve their claims out of court," Steven Maier, an attorney for the Tolkien estate based in Britain, said in a statement. "New Line has not paid the plaintiffs even one penny of its contractual share of gross receipts despite the billions of dollars of gross revenue generated by these wildly successful motion pictures."

Winehouse's mom: Amy on road to recovery

LONDON (AP)—Amy Winehouse's successful performance at the Grammys shows the troubled young singer is on the road to recovery, her mother said in an interview to be broadcast Tuesday.

Winehouse's spirited appearance via satellite Sunday is an indication that she is overcoming the personal demons which have threatened to overshadow her music career, Janis Winehouse told Britain's GMTV.

"Well, it's Amy coming back, she's definitely on the way back," she said.

Sunday was Winehouse's first public performance since being released from a London rehabilitation clinic for substance abuse. The satellite performance was arranged when the U.S. government rejected her application for a work visa. The decision was reversed, but it was too late to make the trip at that point.

Janis Winehouse said her daughter's appearance at the Grammys spoke for itself.

"Well, as you saw, she looks good and it's a case of she's on the road—and that's what it's about—she's on the road to recovery," Janis said.

Winehouse's representatives said Monday the singer was still being looked after.

"She is an outpatient and she is under medical supervision and the treatment continues," said Chris Goodman of Winehouse's public relations firm, the Outside Organization. He declined to elaborate.

Winehouse's five-Grammy win was the crowning achievement to what has been spectacular 18 months for the 24-year-old singer-songwriter. Her album, "Back To Black," has sold over 5 million copies worldwide, and she has won MTV Europe's Artists' Choice Award, the Elle Style Award and the Q Award for Album of the Year.

AP

British actress Sienna Miller arrives at the British Academy Film Awards 2008 at the Royal Opera House in London, Sunday, Feb. 10, 2008.

Sienna Miller tells of feeling 'hunted'

LONDON (AP)—Sienna Miller felt hunted by a group of paparazzi as they chased her car across London in an attempt to find out where she lived, the 26-year-old actress told a British court Monday.

Miller was testifying at the trial of her friend Otis Ferry, who was charged with criminal damage after yanking two sets of keys from the ignitions of pursuing photographers' cars.

Miller said she was chased by photographers as she left Boujis, a celebrity hotspot, following an afterparty at a London nightclub in February 2007.

"In any situation, if you're a woman and you're running and there are men chasing you, it's a threatening situation," she said.

She said at least five paparazzi then tailed her as she drove to her new home, driving dangerously and overtaking her vehicle in an attempt to locate her new address.

"The reason they were being that reckless is that they wanted to find out where I lived, which makes you feel quite hunted as a woman," she said.

During the pursuit, the "Casanova" actress said she called Ferry, who had been with her at the club, to ask for help. Ferry acknowledged that he twice got out at traffic lights to pull the keys from the ignitions of two of the pursuing cars.

McCartney-Mills divorce returns to court

LONDON (AP)—Paul McCartney and Heather Mills returned to court Monday in an attempt to agree on terms for their divorce. The fight over the wealth of the former Beatle, who is estimated to have as much as $1.6 billion, could produce Britain's largest-ever divorce settlement.

Mills, 40, looked tense and said nothing as she entered a courtroom at London's Royal Courts of Justice wearing a gray suit and bright pink shirt.

McCartney, 65, arrived at court after his estranged wife, also wearing a gray suit. He said "good morning" as he entered court carrying a large black case.

Unlike most British court hearings, divorce proceedings are heard in private, and the door of Court 34 bore a sign reading "No Admittance—Strictly Private."

The hearing before Justice Hugh Bennett is scheduled to last five days. The terms of any settlement would not become public record unless it moved to the Court of Appeal, or either of the parties chooses to reveal details.

That has not stopped a frenzy of media interest and speculation. Dozens of photographers staked out entrances to the court Monday, while two news helicopters hovered overhead.

Press reports have suggested that McCartney has offered his wife around $50 million, and that she is seeking at least double that amount.

"Current estimates suggest that Heather is likely to receive anything from 50 million to 100 million pounds ($100-200 million) as her final settlement," said Suzanne Kingston, a family law expert.

Michael Jackson thanks fans in video

NEW YORK (AP)—Michael Jackson appeared in a video to thank fans for the success of "Thriller," the landmark record the reclusive singer is marking with a 25th anniversary edition.

Jackson will release the new version of the blockbuster album Tuesday, featuring new collaborations with Kanye West, Akon, Fergie and will.i.am.

"It's hard to believe that 25 years ago Quincy Jones and I embarked on an album named `Thriller,'" Jackson said in a video message to fans released Monday by his record company, Sony-BMG.

It was not immediately clear exactly when Jackson had made the video, or where it was recorded. He also hinted that he's not through recording music.

"There is still much for to come for Michael Jackson," he said. "My passion for music has never stopped. ... It's my hope that `Thriller' continues to live on for each new generation to discover."

AP

Michael Jackson flashes a V-sign to Japanese media upon his arrival at Narita international airport, near Tokyo in this 2007 file photo.

Jackson, 49, soared to superstardom after releasing "Thriller" in November 1982. The instant classic spawned the hits "Billie Jean," "Beat It" and—of course—"Thriller," and introduced the moonwalk to legions of fans all around the world.

"To be able to say that `Thriller' still holds the record as the biggest selling album of all time is just mind-blowing. I have you, my fans, throughout the world to thank for this achievement," said Jackson, who has sold more than 750 million albums worldwide.

Dolly Parton postpones her 13-tour show

Dolly Parton arrives for the 2007 Songwriters Hall of Fame gala, in this June 7, 2007 file photo in New York. AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A back problem has forced Dolly Parton to postpone a concert tour she planned in support of her new CD. Parton was scheduled to kick off a 13-show tour Feb. 28 in Minneapolis, two days after the release of "Backwoods Barbie," publicist Marcee Rondan said Monday.

Doctors advised Parton to take up to eight weeks off to recover from the unspecified problem.

Rondan said she had no information on the nature of Parton's back condition.

"I know I have been breaking my neck and bending over backwards trying to get my new 'Backwoods Barbie' CD and world tour together, but I didn't mean to hurt myself doing it," Parton, 62, said in a statement.

She said doctors told her she will be "good as new in a few weeks, and I can't wait to get back out there."

The tour will be rescheduled for late April through May. Tickets will be honored for the new dates.

Dear old friend who's nursing grudge won't let go of pain

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: When I recently moved to Ohio, I left behind a group of dear friends. One of them, "Cheryl," and I talk on the phone almost every night.

Everyone in this group got along beautifully. We had great times and have fabulous memories of growing up together. Ten years ago, while I was away at college, the group had a falling out having to do with Cheryl. It was silly and childish—it was over a "boy." It was soon forgotten and apologies were offered. But Cheryl held a grudge and refused to speak to any of the others.

Abby, more than a decade has passed. We're all married now, with kids and jobs. I love Cheryl dearly, but she refuses to reconcile. She's extremely sensitive, and the mere mention of the subject starts her whining about the "mistreatment" she endured.

So even though I'm far away, once again, I must listen to her constant complaint that she has no friends except me. She's upset that I moved away. I'm tired of splitting my time between her and the rest of my friends when I return for a visit.

How can I convince Cheryl that there is a group of girls who miss her terribly and just need her to grow up enough to forgive and forget?

—TORN IN DAYTON, OHIO

DEAR TORN: Young girls can be very cruel. It would be interesting to know the details of what this group of "friends" did to Cheryl when they turned on her, because whatever they did left her unable to trust any of them again. If they really "miss her terribly," then they should be the ones telling her so—not you.

Because her neediness and self-pity have become more than you care to handle, before you are turned off completely, you should let Cheryl know that you no longer want to discuss "ancient history." And because you appear to be her only friend —and a long-distance one at that—you'd be doing her a favor to suggest that she get counseling to help her move beyond the past.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have met a man, "Alvin," who is the love of my life. He is divorced; I have never been married. Alvin has a 16-year-old daughter whom he adores, and she does not approve of our relationship. We want to be married, but he says it has to be OK with his daughter.

If Alvin really loved me, would he let her stand in the way of our happiness?

—WAITING FOR APPROVAL, CHARLOTTE, N.C.

DEAR WAITING: He might—if he felt guilty enough about the breakup of his marriage to her mother. My question to you is, do you love Alvin enough to postpone any wedding plans until his daughter approves, or is out on her own—whichever comes sooner?

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have something I would like to know just for the sake of curiosity.

When my mother became pregnant with me, she was married—but not to the man who impregnated her. Does this make me a bastard? I am not going to be devastated if the answer is yes—I just want to know for the knowing.

—AM I OR AM I NOT, COSHOCTON, OHIO

DEAR ARE YOU OR ARE YOU NOT: The answer to your question is no. Because you were born within the bonds of wedlock, you are as legitimate as the next person.

P.S.: The term "bastard" went out of style at least two decades ago. A better term would be "love child."

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■ ■ ■

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

OK, LET'S TEST THIS TRANSMOGRIFIER GUN.
I WANT TO BE A PTERODACTYL, SO YOU THINK OF ONE AND POINT THE TRANSMOGRIFIER AT ME.
THIS WILL BE GREAT. I'LL TERRORIZE THE NEIGHBORHOOD AWHILE AND THEN YOU CAN TRANSMOGRIFY ME BACK TO A BOY WHEN THE NATIONAL GUARD COMES.
WHAT'S A PTERODACTYL? SOME KIND OF BUG?
NO NO! IT'S A BIG FLYING DINOSAUR! DON'T SHOOT IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS!!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

I WAS GOING TO MAKE LIZ A VALENTINE'S DAY CARD...
BUT I CAN'T CUT OUT A PAPER HEART TO SAVE MY LIFE!
MAYBE I COULD SUBSTITUTE ANOTHER ORGAN
"I LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY SPLEEN"

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

MOM, DAD, CAN I STAY UP AND WATCH TV FOR ANOTHER HOUR?
NOT ON A SCHOOL NIGHT.
PLEASE?!! I'LL SLEEP FOR AN EXTRA HOUR IN THE MORNING!
WELL, IN THAT CASE...
NO, YOU MAY NOT. YOU'D BE LATE FOR SCHOOL.
OH, RIGHT. RIGHT. NO, YOU MAY NOT.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Scoundrel
4 Chum
7 Sound of contentment
8 Narc's measures
10 Inducing gooseflesh
11 Parisian ruffian
13 Booty container
16 Cow's chaw
17 Ignite
18 Blond shade
19 Author Uris
20 Remain
21 Reject with disdain
23 Epigrammatic
25 Unescorted
26 Like some lingerie
27 Big name in insurance (Abbr.)
28 Plant whose juice goes into tequila
30 Resort
33 Recreation centers
36 Tough to endure
37 Make slight modifications
38 Marsh growth
39 Grown-up elvers
40 Red or Black
41 Pismire

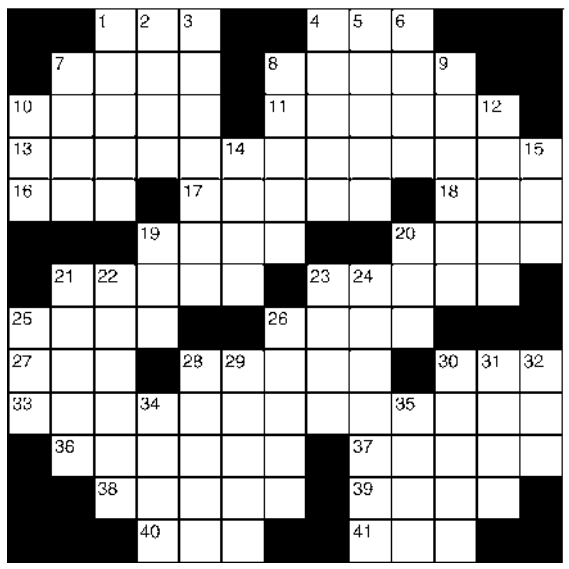
DOWN

1 All better
2 Met melody
3 Bureau
4 One who must be paid?
5 "Oh, woe!"
6 Nessie's home, e.g.
7 Machu Picchu site
8 Couturier Donna
9 Scabbard
10 Listending abbr.
12 English homework, often
14 "Once — a time"
15 Quaker's possessive
19 Schlep
20 Pigpen
21 Wilt Chamberlain nickname
22 Beepers
23 Macadamize
24 Summertime beverage
25 Fool
26 Ginormous
28 Remark to the audience
29 "— Din"
30 Work in a refinery
31 Pod denizens
32 Request
34 Favorable votes
35 Actor Wilson

Solution time: 21 mins.

L	E	V	■	C	O	G	■	R	I	N	K	
I	T	E	M	■	U	M	A	■	E	R	I	E
S	N	A	P	■	P	A	L	I	M	O	N	Y
P	A	L	A	D	I	N	■	D	A	N	E	S
■	■	■	C	O	D	■	W	O	K	■	■	■
C	A	S	T	E	■	P	A	L	E	R	M	O
A	G	O	■	■	F	R	Y	■	■	N	E	W
P	A	L	F	R	E	Y	■	I	M	A	G	E
■	■	■	L	I	Z	■	P	L	Y	■	■	■
A	B	B	O	T	■	P	A	L	O	O	K	A
P	A	L	P	A	B	L	E	■	P	A	I	L
S	L	O	P	■	L	E	A	■	I	T	L	L
E	D	G	Y	■	Y	A	N	■	A	H	O	Y

Yesterday's answer 2-13



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kelly Hu, 40; Peter Gabriel, 58; Stockard Channing, 64; George Segal, 74

Happy Birthday: Use your gifts, talents and know-how to their fullest this year. By taking action you will set a standard others will follow. You may face controversy at a personal level. If you muster up the strength to do what you believe, you will gain respect in the end. Your numbers are 2, 12, 21, 25, 37, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Implement one of your ideas into something that can turn into a moneymaking project. Love and romance will develop through the conversations you have regarding your interests and intentions. Be honest with others but be discerning. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't hold back: Be forceful and direct and you will gain respect and make an impression. Once you disclose your ideas, it will be easy to dedicate your time and effort to obtaining your goals. Believe in what you are doing. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Do your thing but don't rely on anyone else to help you. Motivation will be the key to your advancement and hidden secrets will lead to your demise. A burden may develop at home; don't make promises. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): The only thing to fear is rejection but, at least you will know where you stand and what you have to do to satisfy your own needs. Pleasing others allows you to keep the peace but it isn't always what's best for you. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): The moment you show your emotional weakness, you will be vulnerable to someone else's agenda. If you have to be evasive you may want to rethink the connection you have with the people you are being secretive with. A job that comes up will be worth doing well. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Love, intrigue and travel are all up for grabs. Plan your actions and follow through. Your strength and participation will take you to the winner's circle, no matter what you face or want to pursue. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't be fooled by what others do. You are better off putting your efforts into your surroundings and altering anything that is making your life unhappy. Self-improvement projects and creative endeavors will be favorable. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): It's time to share your thoughts with the outside world and form alliances with people who have an interest in what you are doing. Don't be daunted by those close to you. Go the distance to ensure everything goes according to plan. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Listen to advice being offered by someone with experience. Learning the rules and sticking to regulations will help you avoid a costly mistake. Family and friends will be of help if you are honest about your current position. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Money, investments and making changes to your home and your personal life should be on your agenda today. You can solve problems that will protect you from losses in the future. Honesty will be what counts. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Refuse to let anyone dictate what you should or shouldn't do. Take a dominant role. Emotions will cause sorrow but, if you act out of love and are patient, you will win in the end. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Stick to what you know and don't let anyone talk you into anything different. As long as you have a handle on reaching your goals, you will. Anger and arguing will be a waste of time. Put your energy into something that will bring results. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are set in your ways when it comes to your goals, work ethic and lifestyle. However, you are not afraid to develop new ideas. You are a protector, a crusader and a strong contender.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	8	5	4					
7				2		9	3	
3			7		5			
1		4		7	6			
	3		5	1		7		
		9	3		2	1		
	1			3	9		7	6
	2					3	9	
						8		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/13

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	7	9	4	5	3	1	2	8
5	8	4	2	7	1	3	6	9
3	1	2	8	6	9	4	5	7
2	6	3	1	9	7	5	8	4
1	9	8	5	2	4	6	7	3
4	5	7	3	8	6	2	9	1
8	3	6	7	1	5	9	4	2
7	4	5	9	3	2	8	1	6
9	2	1	6	4	8	7	3	5

Difficulty Level ★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

IMMIGRATION LAWYERS Solution: 8 letters

P	S	S	E	L	T	T	E	S	S	M	B	P	S	S
E	R	U	T	L	U	C	O	N	T	A	C	T	Y	O
S	E	O	E	A	I	C	O	U	R	T	A	S	R	L
P	P	G	F	V	T	I	R	R	A	T	T	P	O	I
O	A	E	R	E	T	I	I	C	U	E	E	R	T	C
L	P	E	C	I	S	S	S	S	M	R	N	I	A	I
I	S	O	D	I	T	S	O	T	M	S	T	V	D	T
T	N	N	L	E	A	L	I	A	I	N	E	A	N	O
I	O	C	R	I	V	L	N	O	E	C	R	T	A	R
C	E	S	O	E	C	E	I	I	N	I	S	E	M	E
Ⓐ	Ⓢ	Ⓘ	Ⓥ	M	N	I	L	Z	G	A	L	T	L	F
L	I	V	E	T	E	C	E	H	E	I	L	P	A	U
E	V	O	M	F	A	C	T	S	F	D	O	S	B	G
A	D	M	I	T	E	S	A	C	F	E	E	S	O	E
L	A	I	C	O	S	W	A	L	P	I	C	E	R	E

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Admit, Advise, Barristers, Case, Client, Conditions, Contact, Court, Culture, Enter, Facts, Fees, File, Income, Labor, Laws, Legal, Live, Mandatory, Matters, Move, Papers, People, Permanent, Policies, Politica, Private, Professionals, Refugee, Rights, Service, Settle, Social, Solicitor, Solve, Specialized, Statistics, Status, System, Visa

Yesterday's Answer: Talent

Treasury 5 is here! Send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($14.20 total each U.S. funds only for one first volume. $1.60 U.S. for each additional volume. To Universal Press Syndicate, Attn: Wonderword, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll free, 1-800-255-6734 ext. 6668. Order online at puzzles.com.

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FOR RENT RESIDENTIAL

Apartment For Rent (in Beach Road, Garapan) One (1) Bedroom fully furnished with back-up generator and 24 hour water, washer & dryer facilities in the building. For inquiries, pls. call 322-6183

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 STOREKEEPER (W 80645)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & worksman compensation provided. Contact: Sunleader Co., Ltd. dba Sunleader Supermart @233-3222.

---

1 MEAT PACKER (W 80646)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical

---

1 HOUSEWORKER (W 80647)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/ housing deductible; self provided food & medical provided. Contact: Warren Harrigan @235-1189.

---

1 CIVIL ENGINEER (W 80648)
Salary:$1,700.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical expenses & workman compensation. Contact: E.Q. Construction Corp. @234-8827.

---

1 HOUSEKEEPING (W 80649)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; free medical & workers compensation. Contact: Full House, Inc. @233-2288.

---

1 ADMIN. ASSISTANT (W 80650)
Salary:$3.75/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Commonwealth Pacific Int'l Inc. @233-2288.

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1 WAITRESS/WAITER (W 80651)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; free medical & workers compensation. Contact: Tai Hu Int'l, Inc. @233-2288.

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1 ASST. MANAGER (W 80652)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self housing; employee self food; free medical & worker compensation. Contact: Chung Hua Inc. @234-7768.

1 ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN (W 80653)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self housing; employee self food; free medical & worker compensation. Contact: Chung Hua Inc. @234-7768.

---

2 A/C TECHNICIAN (W 80654)
Salary:$3.55-$5.00/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; workmen's compensation & medical provided by employer. Contact: Gonzalo V. Pangelinan Jr. dba Pacific Airconditioning & Ref. @234-9267.

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1 PLUMBER (W 80655)
Salary:$3.55-$6.25/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workmen's compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

1 CONSTRUCTION WORKER (W 80656)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workmen's compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

1 PAINTER (W 80657)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workmen's compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

1 MATERIAL COORDINATOR (W 80658)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workmen's compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

1 CONSTRUCTION WORKER (W 80659)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workmen's compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

---

1 HOUSEWORKER (W 80660)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/ monthly deduction housing; $100.00/ monthly deduction food; medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Albert O. Tiu @323-8882/85.

---

1 INSURANCE UNDERWRITER (W 80661)
Salary:$1,300.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Pacific Basin Insurance Co.,@234-5860/7861.

---

1 MARKET RESEARCH ANALYST (W 80662)
Salary:$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provide food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Pacific Wine & Spirits (Saipan), dba P.W.S. @234-3182.

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1 ELECTRICIAN (W 80663)
Salary:$4.75/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing; $8.00/per day food; 100% medical; dental & workers compensation. Contact: Seabridge, Inc. @322-7344.

---

1 AUDITOR (W 80664)
Salary:$1,575.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation employer provided. Contact: Bridge Capital, LLC. @322-2222.

---

1 DAYCARE NURSE (W 80665)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: LBAT Corp. dba Children's World @288-5162.

1 PRE-SCHOOL TEACHER (W 80666)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: LBAT Corp. dba Children's World @288-5162.

---

1 HOUSE MAINTENANCE (W 80667)
Salary:$3.55-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical per CNMI laws & worksman compensation. Contact: Jose A. Ichihara @235-7852.

---

1 HOUSEWORKER (W 80668)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Housing provided; food provided & medical. Contact: Carlene Reyes Tenorio @287-2896.

---

1 MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (W 80669)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Pacific Amusement, Inc. @233-4397.

1 COMPUTER TECHNICIAN (W 80670)
Salary:$3.55-$5.45/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation.

WHATZIT Solution:
Pat on the back

Contact: Pacific Amusement, Inc. @233-4397.

1 ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN (W 80671)
Salary:$3.55-$7.16/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Pacific Amusement, Inc. @233-4397.

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1 ELECTRICIAN (W 80672)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food; health & workers compensation employer provided. Contact: Glicerio D. Arago dba NCI Contractor @287-0847/233-2652.

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1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (W 80673)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; workers compensation & medical. Contact: Palm Springs Life Extension, Inc. dba Palm Springs SPA, Retail Health Products, Skin Care @233-5317.

---

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (W 80674)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation employer provided. Contact: Nero S. Ortizo dba Big Brother Auto Shop @483-7501/898-4110.

---

1 (ASSISTANT) MANAGER (W 80675)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Saipan Magellan, Inc. dba Saipan Magellan Tour/Apples Bar & Rest. @285-7898.

---

2 SOIL CONSERVATIONIST (W 80676)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: Tropex Garden Co., Ltd. @288-7999.

WANTED AVON REPRESENTATIVE
and earn 30% up to 50%
for more information please call
Jocelyn Jeter
@ 287-9300 C • 483-1097 C
jeter_joy@yahoo.com

SMALL ENGINE REPAIR
LAUNDRY REPAIR
- Lawn Mower
- Generator Repair
- Boat Engine
- Bush Cutter Repair
- Motor Bike
- Rewinding

233-5641
Open 7 Day a Week 9:00 AM-9:00 PM

Marianas Maid Services
Are you overwhelmed at work?
Has taking care of your kids and the housework become a burden?
LET US MAKE YOUR HOME OR OFFICE
SPARKLE
Cleaning services starting as low as $30 per cleaning.
All equipment and cleaning supplies provided.
All our staff has been hand picked and are reliable.
Ironing, Laundry, Window washing and many other services available upon request.
Contact Julie at 287-6542 to schedule an appointment.

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CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB No.: ITB08-CGC-040

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 26, 2008 **TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

"PURCHASE OF A 15 PASSENGER VAN FOR THE COMMUNITY GUIDANCE CENTER"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICK-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ JOSEPH K.P. VILLAGOMEZ
SECRETARY OF HEALTH

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

PAT
THE

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Find today's solution in this section

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

Print*	
• 1st position	$10
• 2nd position	$3
• Succeeding positions	$1

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

Combo (Print and Online)*	
• 1st position	$13
• 2nd position	$4
• Succeeding positions	$2

Radio (KCNM/KZMI)	
• Up to 6 positions	$5
• More than 6 positions	$10

*These rates apply to all vacancy announcements that include corresponding benefits and which announcements are all under the same company name.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.
- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Green, Booker among 9 cut by Dolphins

MIAMI (AP)—Quarterback Trent Green was acquired by the Miami Dolphins last year as part of a plan to turn the franchise's fortunes around. Not surprisingly, Bill Parcells' ideas will differ from the previous model.

In the Dolphins' first major player purge since Parcells took charge of Miami's football operations, the team parted ways with Green, wide receiver Marty Booker and seven other players Monday—ushering in the start of what's expected to be a massive offseason roster shakeup by the rebuilding franchise.

"This is never easy, especially since all of these players worked hard during their tenure here," new Dolphins' general manager Jeff Ireland said.

There is a chance that Green—who was due a $500,000 roster bonus if he wasn't cut and who would have cost the Dolphins more than $3.6 million against their 2008 salary cap— could see his Miami tenure continue.

His agent, Jim Steiner, told The Palm Beach Post that Green and Parcells plan to meet soon to discuss options.

"There is a window for him to come back, depending on circumstances," said Steiner, who didn't immediately return a message left at his office by The AP.

Other notable cuts by the Dolphins included tackle L.J. Shelton and massive defensive tackle Keith Traylor, both of whom were starters.

Miami also waived tackle Anthony Alabi, defensive tackle Anthony Bryant, tackle Marion Dukes, defensive tackle Marquay Love and tackle Joe Toledo.

Most of these moves were expected, and more will undoubtedly follow over the coming weeks as Miami looks to retool following its 1-15 season. The Dolphins haven't made the playoffs in six seasons, the longest stretch in franchise history.

Green was placed on injured reserve in October after his second severe concussion in 13 months, and the 37-year-old may contemplate retirement. Traylor suggested at times last season that his 16th season may be his last.

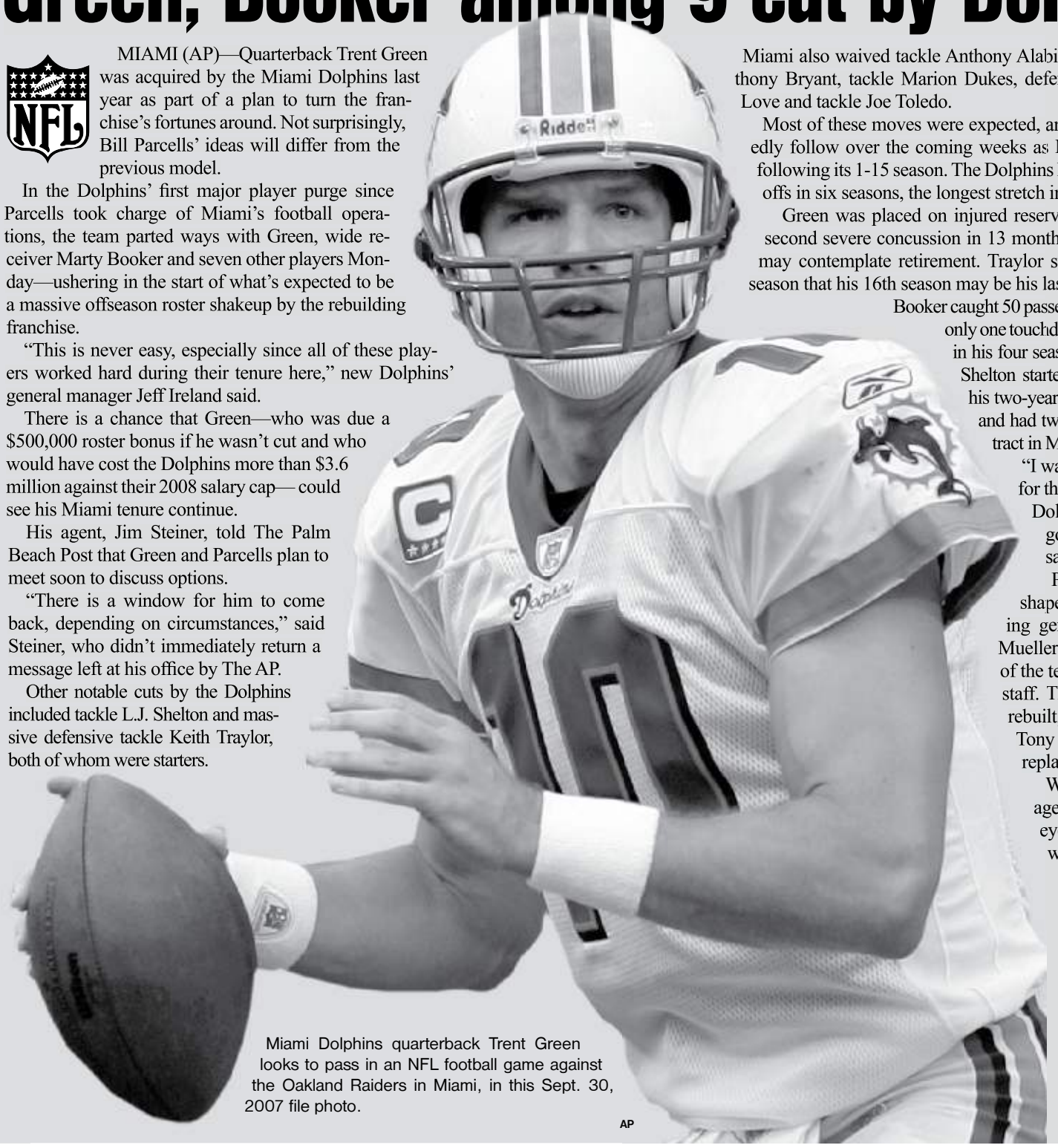
Booker caught 50 passes in 2007, but managed only one touchdown for the second time in his four seasons with the Dolphins. Shelton started all 32 games during his two-year stay with the Dolphins and had two years left on his contract in Miami.

"I want to thank all of them for their contributions to the Dolphins and wish them good luck," Ireland said.

Parcells has already reshaped the front office, firing general manager Randy Mueller and other members of the team's player personnel staff. The coaching staff was rebuilt, most notably with Tony Sparano brought in to replace Cam Cameron.

With the start of free agency Feb. 29, Parcells' eye has clearly turned toward the roster.

"In the case of each of the veterans, it's especially difficult to release players who have been productive and valued members of the organization," Ireland said. "However, we feel these decisions are in the best interest of the team."



Miami Dolphins quarterback Trent Green looks to pass in an NFL football game against the Oakland Raiders in Miami, in this Sept. 30, 2007 file photo.

AP

Redskins introduce new coach Zorn

ASHBURN, Va. (AP)—Always the energetic left-hander, Jim Zorn had an upbeat but nervous start to his coming-out event with the Washington Redskins.

The new coach got the team colors wrong. He paid tribute to an assistant the team recently fired. He lacked the polish of his predecessor, Joe Gibbs, who sat watching from the second row during the news conference Sunday in the Redskins Park auditorium.

Not too surprising, really, given that Zorn himself said it was nothing short of "miraculous" that he was standing where he was: a few feet behind the team's three Super Bowl trophies, essentially making the jump from quarterbacks coach to head coach because none of the candidates on owner Dan Snyder's initial list worked out. The 54-year-old Zorn was taking the first step in finding out what it really means to take a such a big job in a Redskins-crazy town.

"I look at these three trophies," Zorn said, "and it's quite intimidating."

Zorn signed a five-year contract Saturday, with club options for the fourth and fifth years, ending a month-long coaching search in which he was originally supposed to be an interesting sidebar. The Redskins hired him as an offensive coordinator two weeks ago, luring him away from the Seattle Seahawks, then decided late last week to interview him for the head coaching job after New York Giants defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo withdrew from consideration.

Snyder also interviewed Jim Mora, Jim Fassel, Steve Mariucci, Ron Meeks, Pete Carroll, Jim Schwartz, Redskins assistant Gregg Williams and others. Some had pulled out of the running, and, rather than choose from the rest, Snyder decided to give Zorn a shot because the owner said he had been impressed during Zorn's interview for the offensive coordinator position.

Zorn, called away from Redskins Park to Snyder's house for lunch on Thursday, said he gasped when the owner asked him if he was interested in the head coaching job.

"I was a bit taken back, if you will," Zorn said. "I wasn't speechless, because my first words were: 'Certainly, I'd like to do that.' It was a bit shocking. After that I got my game face on and tried to get after it."

Zorn, the sixth Redskins coach since Snyder bought the team in 1999, realizes he suddenly has a lot of work to do. He need to put together an offseason calendar. He needs to get to know his coaches—most of the assistants are already in place—as well as the players.

He said he plans to hire an offensive coordinator but will work hands-on with the quarterbacks and could still end up calling the plays in what will be a version of the West Coast offense. He tried to put to rest any doubts about quarterback Jason Campbell: "He's the starter," Zorn said.

It's also clear he's expecting a lot of help. Asked about defense, he said: "I'm going to leave that alone" in the hands of defensive coordinator Greg Blache. Asked about the daily fires a head coach has to put out—which often distract from the actual job of coaching—Zorn said: "I'm hoping I don't have to put out every fire."

Pettitte dropped from Clemens hearing

WASHINGTON (AP)—Roger Clemens and his accuser, Brian McNamee, will be the main witnesses at a House hearing on the Mitchell Report after Andy Pettitte and two others originally invited to testify were told Monday night they don't need to show up.

Former Yankee Chuck Knoblauch and steroids dealer Kirk Radomski also were dropped from the witness list for Wednesday's public session. One new witness was added Monday night: a member of the staff that worked with former Senate majority leader George Mitchell to produce December's report on drugs in baseball.

But all attention will be focused on Clemens, a seven-time Cy Young Award winner, and McNamee, his former personal trainer, who alleged he injected the pitcher with performance-enhancing drugs.

"I guess it's showtime, isn't it?" Clemens' lead lawyer, Rusty Hardin, said in a telephone interview.

McNamee said in the Mitchell Report that he injected Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone at least 16 times in 1998, 2000 and 2001. Clemens' denials of those allegations drew the attention of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Pettitte, a pitcher for the Yankees, gave a sworn deposition to committee lawyers last week, as did Clemens and McNamee. Knoblauch, a former major leaguer who was a Yankees teammate of Clemens and Pettitte, was interviewed by committee staff earlier, while Radomski had been scheduled for a pre-hearing meeting with the committee Tuesday.

All five originally were invited to testify Wednesday.

"Mr. Knoblauch and Mr. Pettitte answered all the Committee's questions and their testimony at the hearing is not needed," committee chairman Henry Waxman and ranking Republican Tom Davis said in a statement. "Mr. Clemens and Mr. McNamee have also cooperated with the Committee in its investigation."

Pettitte's request to be excused was first reported by The New York Times on its Web site.

Pettitte's attorney, Jay Reisinger, declined to comment after the announcement, while a lawyer for Radomski did not immediately return a phone message left at his office Monday night.

Asked about the change, Knoblauch's attorney, Diana Marshall, said: "I'm not disappointed. I know Chuck is not disappointed."

Rocker: Texas Rangers advised on steroids use

ATLANTA (AP)—John Rocker claims he flunked a drug test ordered by Major League Baseball in 2000 and that he, Alex Rodriguez and other Texas Rangers were advised by management and union doctors following a spring training lecture on how to effectively use steroids.

"Bud Selig knew in the year 2000 John Rocker was taking the juice," the former pitcher said Monday of the baseball commissioner on Atlanta radio station 680. "Didn't do anything about it."

Rocker was suspended for the first 14 days of the 2000 season by Selig for making racial and ethnic remarks the commissioner deemed insensitive. The penalty, originally set to cover 28 days, was reduced by an arbitrator following a grievance.

"As part of the disciplinary process, Mr. Rocker was referred to the confidential Employee Assistance Program," Major League Baseball said in a statement. "Any test of Mr. Rocker would have been conducted by professionals who ran the EAP. Those professionals were obligated to maintain the confidentiality of the result and to use it in developing a treatment and education program for Mr. Rocker. Further discipline was not an option legally available to Major League Baseball at that time."

Rocker said that doctors from management and the players' association, following a spring training talk with the Texas Rangers about steroids and other topics, pulled himself, A-Rod, Rafael Palmeiro and Ivan Rodriguez aside. Rocker was with the Rangers in 2002.

"Look guys, if you take one kind of steroid, you don't triple stack them and take them 10 months out of the year like Lyle Alzado did," Rocker said the doctors told them. "If you do it responsibly, it's not going to hurt you."

Rocker did not identify the doctors.

Baseball did not have a drug-testing agreement between management and the players' union until September 2002 and did not have random testing with penalties until 2004.

Gene Orza, the chief operating officer of the players' association, declined comment.

Bryant, Gasol lead Lakers to win over Charlotte

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored 31 points, Pau Gasol added 26 and the new-look Los Angeles Lakers continued their impressive road trip with a 106-97 win over the reeling Charlotte Bobcats on Monday.

The Lakers improved to 4-1 since acquiring Gasol behind Bryant's third straight game scoring 30 or more points.

In improving to 6-2 on their nine-game road trip, the Lakers never trailed but struggled to put away the Bobcats. Charlotte cut a 13-point deficit to 89-86 midway through the fourth quarter before wilting in their seventh straight loss.

Raymond Felton scored 29 points and Nazr Mohammed added 22 points and 11 rebounds for the Bobcats, who matched their longest losing streak of the season.

Cavaliers 118, Magic 111

At Orlando, Florida, Larry Hughes scored a season-high 40 points and LeBron James added 29 and 10 assists as Cleveland won.

Hughes scored 23 in the third quarter on 6-for-7 shooting, including two 3-pointers and an assortment of drives and jumpers. He hit nine of 10 free throws in the period.

Hedo Turkoglu had 25 points for Orlando, leading all five starters in double figures, while Dwight Howard had 16 points and nine rebounds.

76ers 84, Mavericks 76

At Philadelphia, Andre Miller scored 21 points to lead the Philadelphia 76ers to their fourth straight win.

Miller, the Eastern Conference player of the week, is a big reason why the Sixers are suddenly thinking about a playoff push. Philadelphia has won the first four games of a five-game homestand and moved a half-game behind idle New Jersey for the eighth spot in the Eastern Conference.

Andre Iguodala finished with 14 points, including a pair of jumpers during a late 12-1 run that helped the Sixers pull away and earn a rare standing ovation from the home crowd.

Josh Howard led the short-handed Mavericks with 17 points before leaving in the fourth with a back injury.

Spurs 93, Raptors 88

At Toronto, Manu Ginobili scored a season-high 34 points and added a career-high 15 rebounds, leading the San Antonio Spurs.

Tim Duncan added 22 points and 13 rebounds for the Spurs, who led from wire-to-wire and won for the fifth time in six games.

Ginobili had 21 points in 19 first-half minutes, scored three more in the third, then helped put the game away with 10 in the fourth.

Toronto's Jose Calderon scored a career-high 27 as the Raptors dropped their third straight at home.

Clippers 96, Bucks 89

At Milwaukee, Al Thornton scored 25 points and Sam Cassell added 21 points and eight assists as the Los Angeles Clippers beat the Milwaukee Bucks.

Los Angeles, which finished 3-4 on its road trip, also got 20 points from Corey Maggette.

Mo Williams led Milwaukee with 31 points. Michael Redd finished with just 11 points on 3-of-13 shooting, taking only one shot in the first half.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers' Paul Gasol, left, from Spain, and Charlotte Bobcats' Jared Dudley (4) battle for a rebound during the second half of an NBA basketball game on Monday, Feb. 11, 2008 in Charlotte, N.C

Rockets 95, Portland 83

At Houston, Yao Ming had 25 points and seven rebounds as the Houston Rockets won their seventh straight.

Rafer Alston scored 13 of his 17 points in the third quarter, when the Rockets began to stretch their lead over the team right behind them in the Western Conference standings.

Tracy McGrady had 12 points and six assists for the Rockets, who've matched their longest winning streak since they won the last seven games of the 2004-05 season.

Former Texas star LaMarcus Aldridge scored 22 to lead the Trail Blazers, who've lost four of their last five.

Warriors 120, Wizards 117

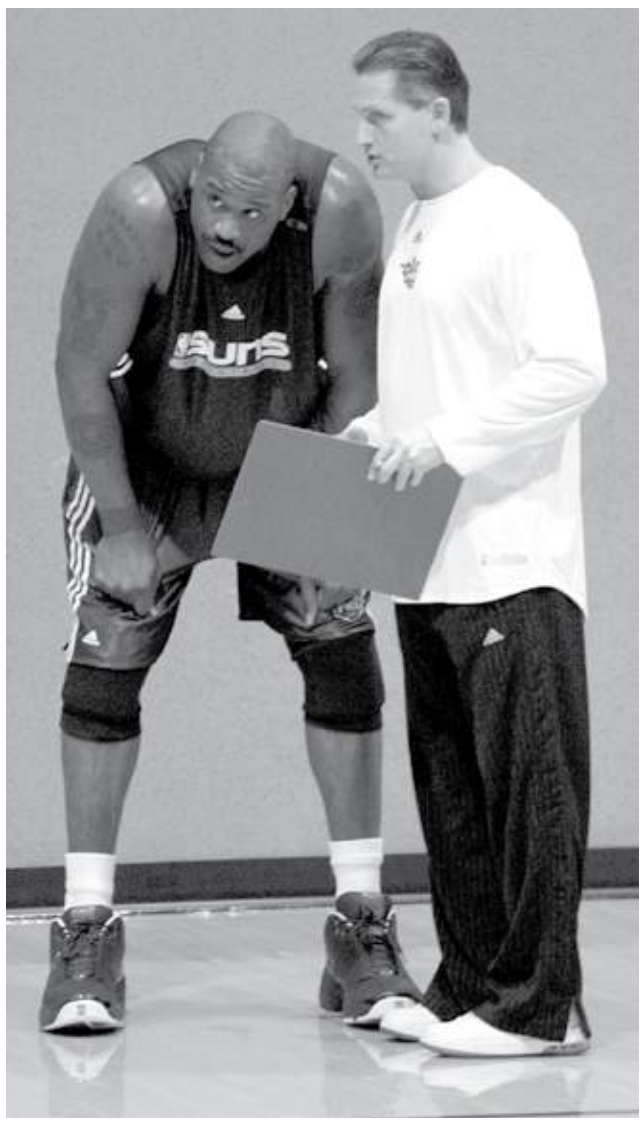
At Oakland, California, Stephen Jackson scored a season-high 41 points, hitting the go-ahead 3-pointer and getting 10 of Golden State's 12 straight points in the final minutes of a stunning victory.

Jackson's 3-pointer with 55.6 seconds to play gave Golden State its first lead since the opening minute of their 11th victory in 15 games. Monta Ellis added 22 points and Al Harrington had 21 for the Warriors, who fell behind by 23 points in the first half but gradually chipped away at the lead, eventually holding Washington scoreless for 2:50 while rallying to win.

Jackson, playing on a sprained left ankle, made six free throws and that big 3-pointer in the final minute, finishing one point shy of his career high after scoring 16 points in the fourth quarter.

Roger Mason scored a career-high 32 points and Antawn Jamison added 25 for the Wizards, who lost their eighth straight and fell apart late.

Shaq winded but fine after Suns practice



AP

Phoenix Suns center Shaquille O'Neal talks with assistant coach Phil Weber during a team basketball practice Monday, Feb. 11, 2008 in Phoenix.

PHOENIX (AP)—Shaquille O'Neal practiced with the Phoenix Suns for the first time Monday, showing no sign of the hip injury that has sidelined him since Jan. 21.

"It was different. It was very intense," he said after the one-hour workout. "I learned a lot. Now I can see why they can go at the pace they play at. When you just do short bursts like this, then you can save it all for the game."

Just when he will play in a game remained undecided.

"I haven't done anything in a month, but I'm in pretty good shape," O'Neal said. "It will probably take me a few more days to get in tune. The good thing about these guys here is they told me when I'm comfortable, when I'm one-thousand percent, then I can join them."

Phoenix has two games before the All-Star break—at Golden State on Wednesday night and at home against Dallas on Thursday. The first game after the break is at home against Shaq's old team, the Los Angeles Lakers, his former coach Phil Jackson and his old teammate Kobe Bryant.

"I think it's going to take a little bit," coach Mike D'Antoni said. "It's going to be an adjustment for our guys and for him. It's hard to think and play basketball at the same time. Right now, he's got to think where he's going to go and all that. But it's going to be good chemistry and it's going to change things up, hopefully for the better."

D'Antoni said the Suns will "not rush him back for any reason." The coach said he will meet with O'Neal and trainer Aaron Nelson after Tuesday's practice to map out plans.

Phoenix is 2-1 since the trade last Wednesday that brought O'Neal from the Miami Heat for Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks. The Suns have the conference's best record at 36-15 but only 5 1/2 games separate the top nine teams in the West.

O'Neal injured his hip diving for a loose ball against Utah on Dec. 22. He returned Jan. 16 but was sidelined again five days later. An MRI showed inflammation in the left hip, shutting him down from all basketball activity.

In going ahead with the trade, the Suns were confident their staff would be able to get O'Neal in playing condition.

"The hip's feeling pretty good, better than it's felt in a while," O'Neal said. "I'm used to just getting injections and going back out there. They told me they have their style, and they want me to stick with it."

O'Neal said he needs to get back in basketball shape and has to be comfortable with playmaker Steve Nash in a system far different from the one used by Pat Riley in Miami.

"I'm not going to rush anything because this is already a fine-tuned machine, and any kink could throw it off," O'Neal said. "I don't want to be the negative kink. I want to step in like I've been with this team the last three years. I have to make sure that everything's right."

He's been impressed by much of what he's seen, particularly the ability of Amare Stoudemire, named Western Conference player of the week on Monday.

"I didn't know he was that good," O'Neal said. "I really didn't."

O'Neal's arrival will allow Stoudemire to move to his more natural power forward position.

"I think it makes my job a little easier," Stoudemire said. "If you look at me standing beside him I look more like a point guard than a center."

The entire Phoenix team seemed energized by O'Neal's presence.

"Most practices you don't want to be out there," Grant Hill said, "but today everybody wanted to be out there and look forward to making it work. That's going to be the challenge. That's going to be the fun part."

O'Neal does not expect to be the star.

"I'm a historian of the game, so I understand that on this team I'm probably a big role player, and I have no problem with that," O'Neal said. "I did my thing in my prime, and it's Amare's prime right now. I think it's my job to get him to the next level. Toward the end of my career, I have no problem coming here and just fitting in and just helping these guys get to the next level."

He compares his job to the role of an aging Kareem Abdul-Jabbar on the "Showtime" Lakers teams of Magic Johnson and James Worthy.

"Kareem was fortunate enough to have those style of players around him toward the end of his career, and I sort of feel like him now," O'Neal said. "I'm no idiot. I'm not going to come in here trying to take over and take 30 shots. I'm going to fit in very nicely—rebound, outlet to Steve, get some easy buckets, play some defense. That's all we need to do."

Realtors, Giants forge title duel

MANILA, Philippines—With practically no all-Filipino history to talk about, Sta. Lucia Realty finally got the chance to etch its own mark by bringing down a side which has one of the proudest pasts in the tournament.

The Realtors topped the Alaska Aces, 92-84, behind a breakneck offense and an unforgiving defense Sunday night and advanced to the Smart PBA Philippine Cup Finals for the franchise's first title series appearance in seven years.

And standing on the opposite side of the floor in the best-of-seven Finals on Friday is another team which calls this tournament home.

Purefoods, 11-time finalists here, put itself on track to winning a fifth title after holding off a game Red Bull squad, 83-71, in their version of sudden death later.

James Yap torched the Barako with a night-high 28 and Marc Pingris added 18 points and 14 rebounds for Purefoods.

Playing like grizzled veterans before an Araneta Coliseum crowd of close to 16,000, the Realtors zoomed to double-digit leads early and sustained their march to an all-Filipino Final for the first time in its Philippine Basketball Association existence.

Sta. Lucia led by 20 points at one stage in the second quarter before holding off some mild Alaska comebacks to pound out the win in its first taste of Game 7 pressure many thought the Realtors wouldn't be able to handle.

Rookie point guard Ryan Reyes scattered 21 points and drilled the killer three-pointer with under 30 seconds to play as the Realtors finally snuffed the fight out of the Aces.

The Realtors have made it to the Finals only twice before, the last was when they won the import-spiced 2001 Governors Cup behind Damien Owens. Only three players from that team have remained with the squad—Marlou Aquino, Dennis Espino and Paolo Mendoza.

First Game

Sta. Lucia 92 – Reyes 21, Williams 19, Omolon 17, Espino 17, Yeo 8, Miranda 8, Gonzales 2, Aquino 0, Mendoza 0.

Alaska 84 – Cortez 17, Ferriols 12, Dela Cruz 12, Cariaso 12, Miller 10, Bono 9, Hugnatan 8, Thoss 2, Laure 2, Quiñahan 0, Aban 0, Bajar 0.

Quarters: 21-16, 45-31, 66-53, 92-84

Second Game

Purefoods 83 – J. Yap 28, Pingris 18, Raymundo 16, Salvador 8, Adducul 5, Simon 4, R. Yap 4, Evangelista 0, Castillo 0.

Red Bull 71 – Valenzuela 19, Adriano 13, Pinnisi 9, Hrabak 8, Robinson 7, Baguio 7, Najorda 4, Sharma 2, Cruz 2, Bugia 0, Ybañez 0.

Quarters: 30-16, 48-40, 66-57, 83-71. ***(PDI)***

Lady bowlers on Saipan inviting public

JON PEREZ

Some of the participants in the Saipan Women's Thursday Night Bowling League pose for a group photo during last year's award ceremony at Len's 5 bar.

Female bowlers participating in the Saipan Women's Thursday Night Bowling Association is inviting other women and youth keglers to join their ongoing league.

SWTNBA official Lucy Deleon Guerrero said they regularly play their games every Thursday night at 6:30pm at the Saipan Bowling Center in San Jose.

They currently are in the 14th week of the current season and there are 10 more weeks left before they start their season. The current Thursday Night league season is expected to end on April 17.

In May last year, J.E.T. Holdings/Pepsi won the title in the 2007 season of the Women's Thursday Night Bowling League. They compiled a 68-28 record to claim the $335 top purse.

The team was composed of Hercia Alepuyo, Del Camacho, Lourdes Deleon Guerrero, Sue Ellis, Terry Hiroichi, Rhonda Nogis, and Bernie Palacios.

A total of $2,425 in cash prizes was given away in the banquet.

For more information about the Women's Thursday Night Bowling League, call Deleon Guerrero at 236-9830 or Sue Ellis 287-7469. ***(Jon Perez)***

TORGESON

From Page 28

volunteers of the race. "The support of that race was very good and the local cheering was great to hear."

Prior to the Hell of the Marianas, Torgeson trained along with other local riders who helped him get familiarized with the course. "I had trained with a number of local riders who helped me to be a better rider, and it was nice when it all came together so well in the [Hell of the Marianas]."

The Commonwealth Health Center anesthesiologist immediately made an impact in local racing events since he, together with wife Alyson and kids Carsten and Piia, arrived Sept. 1 last year.

His first running event was the SIS 5K Fun Run where he broke Jack Kabiriel's 2001 record of 18 minutes and 59 seconds by posting a new mark of 16:40.

Torgeson again made headlines a few weeks after the SIS fun run when he topped the Banzai Memorial Half-Marathon in record-breaking fashion. He posted a time of 1:18.04 to shatter the 2006 record of 1:30.10 set by Yoshi Suzuki.

He began 2008 by winning the 26th Half Marathon last month from Micro Beach at the American Memorial Park. Toregeson, who was fresh from a month-long holiday break, clocked in at 1:21:00.

Torgeson became a member of the Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation prior to his arrival on Saipan. "I joined the NMITF before coming out here, and I had a pretty good idea that I would be competitive on the island."

Torgeson, who also competed in the Boston Marathon, said he had no idea of how it feels like running in a tropical environment. "I never came across any times for the race out here and I did not know how running in the hear and humidity would change my results."

He said that he first focused on biking for the first few months to acclimate himself. "That paid off, although I have some new scars from my training on Saipan's slippery roads."

Before relocating to Saipan, Torgeson and his family lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico for nine years. He started running almost three years ago since he has long planned of joining a marathon. "I had said that I wanted to complete a marathon"

"One day I looked at the calendar and saw that it was exactly 16 weeks until the local marathon. There just so happens to be a classic training schedule that requires 16 weeks to prepare for a marathon," said Torgeson.

"I loosely followed that and entered running. Before that I ran a few races in medical school, most of my comfort with running comes from having spent majority of my life playing football (soccer)," added Torgeson, who never became a member of a college track and field team or a cross country squad.

The biggest event that he competed in was the Boston Marathon. "My brother and his family lived outside of Boston so my family and I took a vacation to see them while I got to run the [race]. There were 20,000 participants and fantastic cheering from the public who lined almost the entire course."

STEADY

From Page 28

in NMIFA grew to almost 700 players in the youth, women's, and men's leagues.

Perry Lo, who is now active with NMIFA along with other members of the defunct football association, CYSO.

Knecht said the youth league alone has more than 400 kids playing in a total of 32 teams divided in four zones on Saipan.

NMIFA has also established a men's and women's program where players volunteer their time as coaches and referees in the youth league.

Currently, the Women's Football Committee is holding weekly games in their 7-a-against-7 league every Saturday mornings, from 8am to 11am, at Garapan Elementary School.

The Men's Football Committee has also an ongoing league where six teams (FC Arirang, Onwel, Inter, Independents, Multinational FC, and Ol'Aces) are playing every Sunday at the Civic Center Field from 12pm to 4pm.

NMIFA's men's and women's program had a combined roster of more than 200 players.

Knecht is inviting the community to come to the games to learn and observe the world's most popular sport. "No experience is necessary and you will find that once you play, or coach, it leaves you waiting for the next practice, over and over again."

She added that by establishing clubs geographically for easy practicing and playing, it brings football closer to the community and further promote the sport.

"Anyone can learn the sport, its rules and play the game. It requires nothing more than a couple of cones, a ball, shin guards, and a little effort," said Knecht.

She also challenged athletes in other sports like track and field, baseball, basketball, softball, and volleyball to try football during their off season. "Many of our youth players participate in multiple sports, it keeps them conditioned when their sport is not in season."

"NMIFA typically runs two season annually. The first season is during the winter and spring, running from late January to early April. The second is in fall, which usually runs from late August to early November. Both seasons are usually about 12 weeks long."

LEE

From Page 28

5); Abigail Guthrie (No. 8), and Briar Preston (No. 11); Haruka Naito (No. 6) and Mai Minokoshi (No. 7) of Japan; Korea's Ju-eun Kim (No. 12); and Russia's Tanya Samodelok (No. 15).

Thirteenth ranked Sarah Henderson of New Zealand was the only seeded player that was knocked out when she lost to compatriot Leela Beattie, 6-7, 1-6.

The Canterbury Championships and Wellington Summer Championships are both ITF Grade IV events. The two junior tennis tournaments are ITF world junior ranking events where players can earn points. Lee is expected to return to Saipan on Feb. 19.

LITTLE

From Page 28

The 2008 season opened last Friday, Feb. 8, with a brief ceremony at the FMP baseball field where various government officials and members of the Legislature attended the event.

The board has yet to finalize the schedule of games in the Majors division.

On Saturday, Feb. 16, the Fielders will take on the Jets at 9am in the Juniors division and will be followed by the Senior League match between the Jets and Fielders.

Sunday's schedule will have the Aztecs battling the PTI Dolphins in the Big League at 9am, while the UMDA Ol'Aces face the Kagman Lion Hearts in the Junior division match.

For more information, call SLLBA board secretary Bobbie S. Norita at 235-7025 to 32 at extension 113 or 114. ***(Jon Perez)***

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	39	9	.813	–
Toronto	27	23	.540	13
New Jersey	22	29	.431	18 1/2
Philadelphia	22	30	.423	19
New York	15	36	.294	25 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	32	21	.604	–
Washington	24	27	.471	7
Atlanta	21	26	.447	8
Charlotte	18	34	.346	13 1/2
Miami	9	40	.184	21

Central Division

Detroit	37	13	.740	–
Cleveland	29	22	.569	8 1/2
Indiana	21	30	.412	16 1/2
Chicago	20	30	.400	17
Milwaukee	19	33	.365	19

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	34	15	.694	–
Dallas	34	17	.667	1
San Antonio	33	17	.660	1 1/2
Houston	31	20	.608	4
Memphis	13	37	.260	21 1/2

Northwest Division

Utah	33	19	.635	–
Denver	31	19	.620	1
Portland	28	23	.549	4 1/2
Seattle	13	37	.260	19
Minnesota	10	39	.204	21 1/2

Pacific Division

Phoenix	36	15	.706	–
L.A. Lakers	34	17	.667	2
Golden State	31	20	.608	5
Sacramento	23	26	.469	12
L.A. Clippers	17	32	.347	18

Yesterday's Games

Cleveland 118, Orlando 111
Philadelphia 84, Dallas 76
San Antonio 93, Toronto 88
L.A. Lakers 106, Charlotte 97
L.A. Clippers 96, Milwaukee 89
Houston 95, Portland 83
Golden State 120, Washington 117

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Japanese pro riders support CNMI tourism

Photos and Text By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Marianas Visitors Authority and the CNMI government found an ally in the person of two Japanese professional wakeboarders in promoting the islands as a possible tourist destination.

Japanese Wakeboarding Association members Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama and Makoto Fujimoto, who are both regular visitors on Saipan, were again on island and paraded their skills and practiced their high-flying stunts on the Saipan Lagoon.

Both Hatakeyama and Fujimoto again spent almost a week on Saipan accompanying some of their friends and customers enjoy the extreme water sport of wakeboarding.

The 37-year-old Hatakeyama and the 32-year-old Fujimoto, who are both from Osaka Yodogawa Prefecture, own a professional wakeboard towing shop in one of Japan's environmental cities. Their business, Toko Panas, has been running for almost three years now.

The two were part of a 13-man group that arrived last Feb. 7 on Saipan to enjoy wakeboarding since it is still winter in Osaka.

Hatakeyama and Fujimoto, through interpreter Kumiko T. Deleon Guerrero, said they are supporting tourism in the CNMI. It was their third time to visit the island since they have been competing every year in the Chagi Cup.

Deleon Guerrero, who owns J&K Marine Sports with husband Joe, said they want to let the people of Japan know that you can do wakeboarding and other water sports in the CNMI whole year round because of its warm tropical climate.

The two Japanese wakeboarding pros and their clients returned to Osaka Yodogawa Prefecture yesterday. They are expected to be back on Saipan this October for the staging of the 6th Annual Chagi Cup.

Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama, fifth left, and Makoto Fujimoto, seating on boat, join their friends for a group photo after their practice round at the waters off Saipan Grand Hotel last Saturday.

Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama prepares to propel himself in midair.

Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama propels himself in the air.

Makoto Fujimoto goes airborne.

Makoto Fujimoto shows off one his tricks during his practice round at the waters off Saipan Grand Hotel last Saturday.

Makoto Fujimoto prepares to land on the water.

Makoto Fujimoto plays with the waves.

Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama adjusts himself in midair.

Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama lands safely on the water.

Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama displays one of his tricks that earned him the title in the 2005 Malaysia Championships.

Japanese pro riders support CNMI tourism

The Marianas Visitors Authority and the CNMI government found an ally in the person of two Japanese professional wakeboarders in promoting the islands as a possible tourist destination. 27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Green, Booker among 9 cut by Dolphins

Quarterback Trent Green was acquired by the Miami Dolphins last year as part of a plan to turn the franchise's fortunes around. Not surprisingly, Bill Parcells' ideas will differ from the previous model. 24

Torgeson can't forget Hell of the Marianas

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Eli Torgeson considers the Inaugural Hell of the Marianas full-island cycling race as the most memorable event that he competed in last year as he got the chance to see firsthand the island of Saipan.

Torgeson, who is busy training for his first triathlon event next month, said that, although the climbs were tough he still enjoyed the Hell of the Marianas. "It was spectacular to see much of the island."

"The climbs were staggering while at other times the downhill speed was frightening.''

Torgeson won the Hell of the Marianas despite recovering from the cuts and bruises he sustained almost two weeks before the full-island cycling race. He entered his name into the CNMI record books when he won the race.

Torgeson completed the treacherous and grueling course in three hours, 20 minutes, and 33 seconds. His record will be the time to beat in this year's race as cycling enthusiasts' return to Saipan for the second staging in 2008.

Torgeson encountered an accident during the first Enticer race by the NMITF last Oct. 13 when he fell from his bike while making a turn by the Grotto.

Torgeson, who led most of the way in the Hell of the Marianas, commended the organizers and

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JON PEREZ
Eli Torgeson waves to his supporters as he crosses the finish line of last year's Inaugural Hell of the Marianas full-island cycling race at Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio.

Lee ends New Zealand campaign on sour note

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Different tournament, same unfortunate result.

Vivian Lee ended her New Zealand campaign on a sour note, losing again in the first round of the Wellington 18-and-under Summer Championships last Monday, Feb. 11, at the Renouf Tennis Center.

Lee lost to the same opponent that beat her in last week's SunSmart Under-18 Canterbury Championships at Wilding Park in Christchurch.

Australia's Nicole Hoynaski made it two in a row against Lee when she cruised to a 6-0, 6-1 victory in their Round of 64 match.

Lee was able to qualify for the eight remaining spots in the main draw, but could not sustain her momentum to go down 0-2 in her head-to-head match up against Hoynaski.

Lee joined New Zealand's Frances Askew of New Zealand; Australia's Sophie Holland-Smith, Kristalla Dimitrakopolous, and Hoynaski; and Japan's Chizuru Yamazaki and Moe Aoki in moving into the main draw after beating their opponents in the qualifying draw.

Hoynaski now faces Aroha Herewini of New Zealand in the second round after the 16th seed dispatched Samoa's Steffi Carruthers, 3-6, 6-1, 6-3.

Papua New Guinea's Abigail Teri-Apisah, another Pacific Oceania junior netter and seeded 10th, moved on into the second round after a 6-1, 6-3 demolition of Australia's Sinead Costello.

Her next opponent is ninth seed Casey Anspach of Australia, who drew a first round bye.

Lee, who ranked a career-best 973 in the International Tennis Federation world junior rankings as of Jan. 8, 2007, dropped to a 2-5 record in her career singles matches and is 0-3 in doubles. She suffered her second loss for the year.

Top seed Chelsea Te Tai of New Zealand drew a bye in the first round and will face compatriot Kataraina Hunia, who scored a 6-4, 6-2 win over countryman Renata Hryckiewicz, in the Round of 32.

Other seeded players in the Round of 32 are Mia Vriens (No. 2), Ashling Sumner (No. 4), Casey Anspach (No. 9), and Stephanie Slaveski (No. 14) of Australia; New Zealand's Amelia Harris (No. 3), Katherine Westbury (No.

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Vivian Lee prepares for a forehand return in one of her training sessions at the Hyatt Regency Saipan tennis courts.

JON PEREZ

Steady growth of players please football officials

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association vice president and youth committee chair Sue Knecht said NMIFA officials were pleased with the steady growth of participation from the community.

Knecht, in an email, said that from a mere 70 kids playing and learning the sport from the now defunct CNMI Youth Soccer Organization membership

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JON PEREZ
Northern Mariana Islands Football Association officials hope to continue their youth program.

Little League meeting today

The 2008 board of directors of the Saipan Little League Baseball Association will have a meeting today, Wednesday, 11:30am at Tropicana Restaurant at Hafadai Beach Hotel.

The meeting is to prepare the league for the actual games that will start on Saturday at the Francisco M. Palacios and Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan baseball fields.

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